

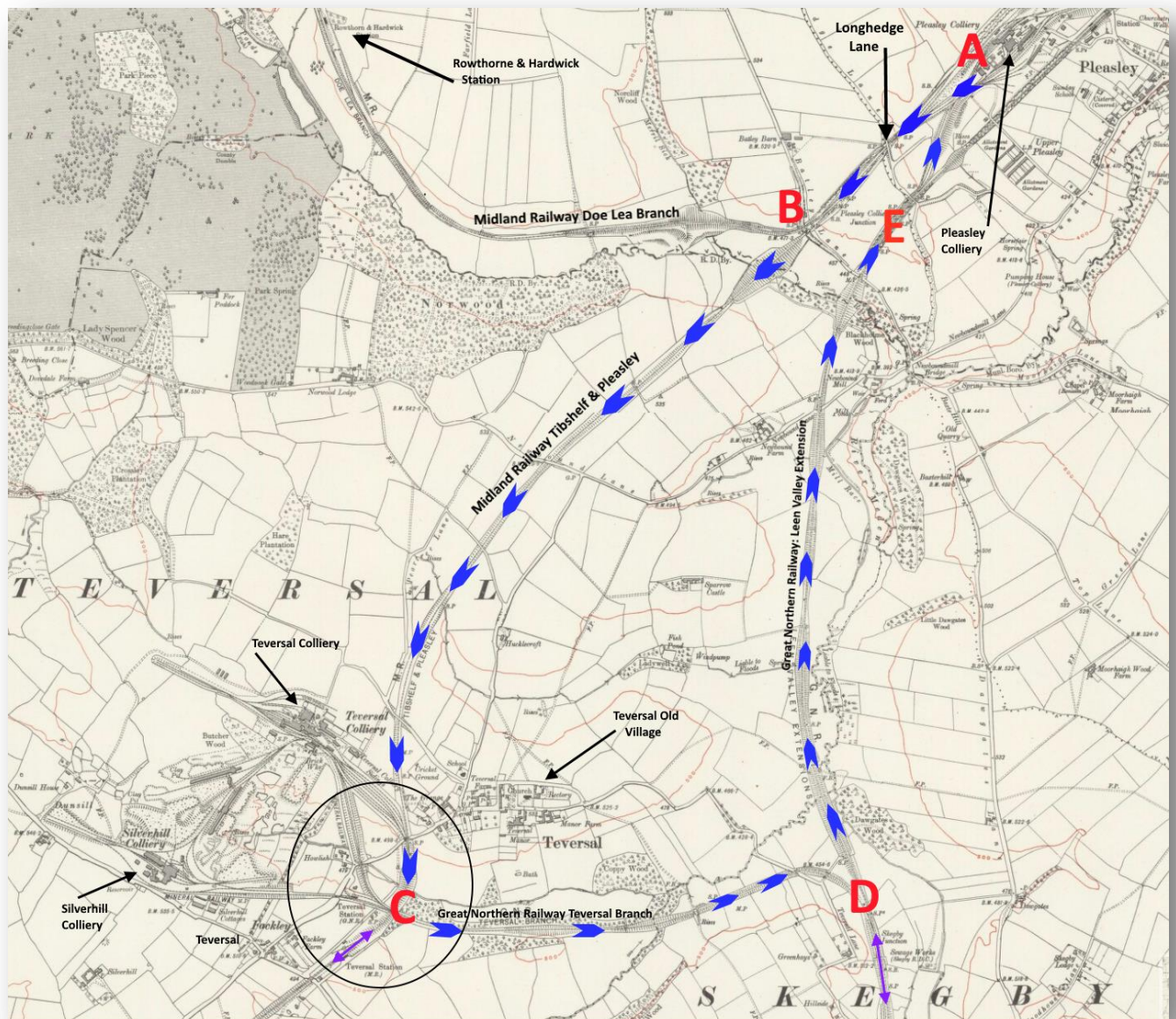
The Railways of Pleasley Teversal & Skegby a walk and a history



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The Complete Walk on the 1914 Ordnance Survey Map



The walk begins at Pleasley Colliery (at the path above the car park), we then walk to Teversal, Skegby and finally, return to Pleasley. The letters marked **red** on the above map mark the places we stop to take a brief look at history. The actual railway system at Pleasley is covered at the end of the walk.

If the need takes you there are refreshments available at Pleasley Pit, Teversal Visitors Centre or the Carnarvon Arms in Teversal Village.

The walk is on the modern Teversal Trail but for our purposes we are back in 1914.

Introduction

This is an attempt to walk and tell the history of railways in a very small area of Derbyshire and North Nottinghamshire: Pleasley, Teversal and Skegby. The reason why there are railways here is due simply to the presence of coal mining. There were, of course, passenger services on each of our railways but these were mostly provided as an afterthought – usually after the coal was moving and often as a result of pressure from local authorities or other bodies. In reality, the number of people then living in the area would never really justify passenger services.

There was huge overlap in terms of what the railway companies built, often encouraged by the colliery owners whose interest lay in having competition for moving their coal. A cursory look at what needed to be built to move coal makes it clear that one railway could have handled it all – The Midland Railway system could have handled everything. But these railways were built in a time of private railway companies each competing fiercely against the other – at times rivalry almost resembled war.

The importance of railways in this area cannot be overstated for, at the time the mines were opened, it would have been impossible to move the large quantities of coal these collieries produced in any other way. The roads were poor and we have to remember that only horse drawn wagons were then available to move large loads. Without the railways the mines would not be possible and without the mines the railways would not have been built - and don't forget the people who were given jobs and needed homes, shops and so on.

Today's walk takes in three railways and three coal mines. We begin our walk at what remains of the Pleasley Colliery which was served initially by the Midland Railway (Tibshelf & Pleasley Line) but was later joined by the Great Northern (Leen Valley Extension). This resulted in two stations at Pleasley. We then walk on the Tibshelf & Pleasley Line to a point where we can see clear evidence of the Doe Lea Branch Line. We then continue on the Tibshelf & Pleasley to Teversal where both the Midland and the Great Northern Railways were in competition for coal traffic. Our walk then takes us down the Great Northern Railway Teversal Branch to Skegby which is located on the Leen Valley Extension. Finally, back to Pleasley. There is an option at the end to visit what remains of the railways and stations of Pleasley.

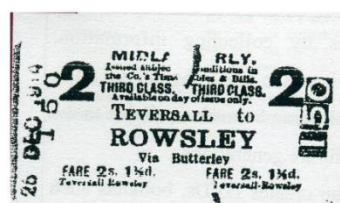
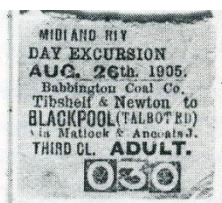
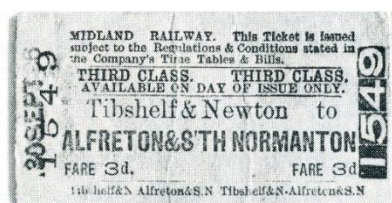
The main period of railway building in our area was between 1865 and 1901 and this is our main focus for the history covered here. We certainly don't move beyond the early 1930s when passenger services were lost. Some small attempt to link our local history to the bigger picture of railway and mining development is made but the full story is beyond our scope.

The area of the walk is rather special to me for I was born in Skegby: in the station yard where I lived for a year before we moved our few possessions by horse and cart up the Anchor Hill to the then newly built Stamper Crescent. When young, I spent most of my free time around the lanes and railways of this area. The railways were a special interest. Later I worked at Silverhill Colliery for ten years.

The maps deserve a special mention. They are Ordnance Survey maps and, although published in 1921, they were surveyed in 1914 and for me this gives them a special quality for they show our small area as it was about 100 years ago.

Railway history is complicated by the fact that companies regularly changed their name or joined with other companies. A massive change took place following The Railway Act of 1921 which forced the railway companies to amalgamate after 1923. Our history mainly stops before this point.

Stuart Watson September 2016



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Note on the symbols used



Where you see this symbol you will find walking instructions. You could do the walk by following the symbols if the history stuff doesn't interest you.

The Walk Part One: Pleasley Colliery & Railway



We begin the walk at the car park exit which is located just below the winding house and shafts.

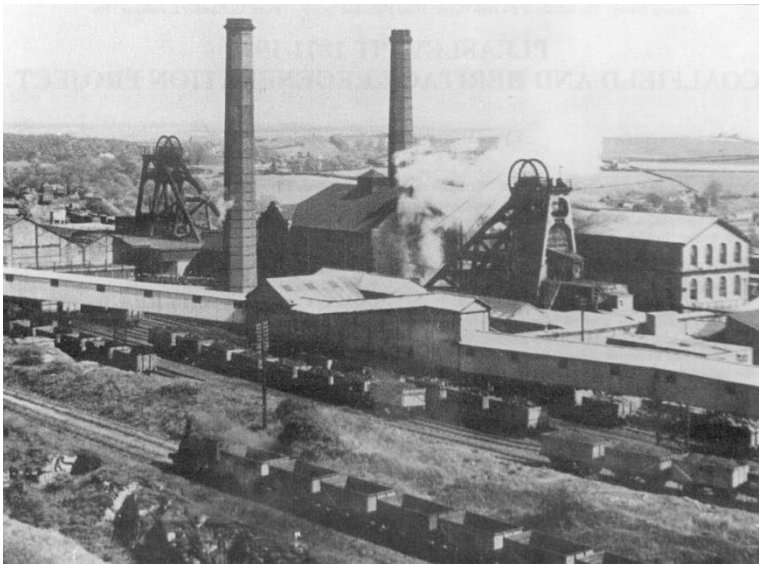
Walking out of the car park top entrance. We walk on the white path just below the Engine House and shafts and follow it until we meet Longhedge Lane which crosses our path. This is a very old lane running from Stony Houghton (where it meets Green Lane) down to Newboundmill Lane.

At this point we look down onto the Tibshelf & Pleasley Line. It's clear from our height above the railway just how much earth moving has taken place since the colliery closed.

Brief History

Pleasley Colliery & Railways

The colliery is situated in the North East Derbyshire coalfield. As with so many mines in the area it was the Stanton Iron Company that acquired the Pleasley Park Mineral rights in 1871 and soon after this began to sink the shafts necessary to get at the coal. The objective was the Top Hard and the Low Bright seams. Interesting, the Pleasley Park Estate was then owned by the Nightingale Family and by 1895 the owner was the trustees of Florence Nightingale.



Pleasley Colliery from the west

The pit came into production in 1879 but in the early days the mine mainly supplied local markets for full production was held back due to lack of means of transporting large quantities of coal – It meant that production was limited to satisfying local demand. The railways were a little late getting to Pleasley.

The pit seems to have reached its peak during the 1950's and the 1970's witnessed a steady decline. The last coal was mined from Pleasley in 1979 after which its seams were worked from the Shirebrook drift. In effect Pleasley merged with Shirebrook and many of its workers were relocated there. The south shaft at Pleasley continued to be used both as a

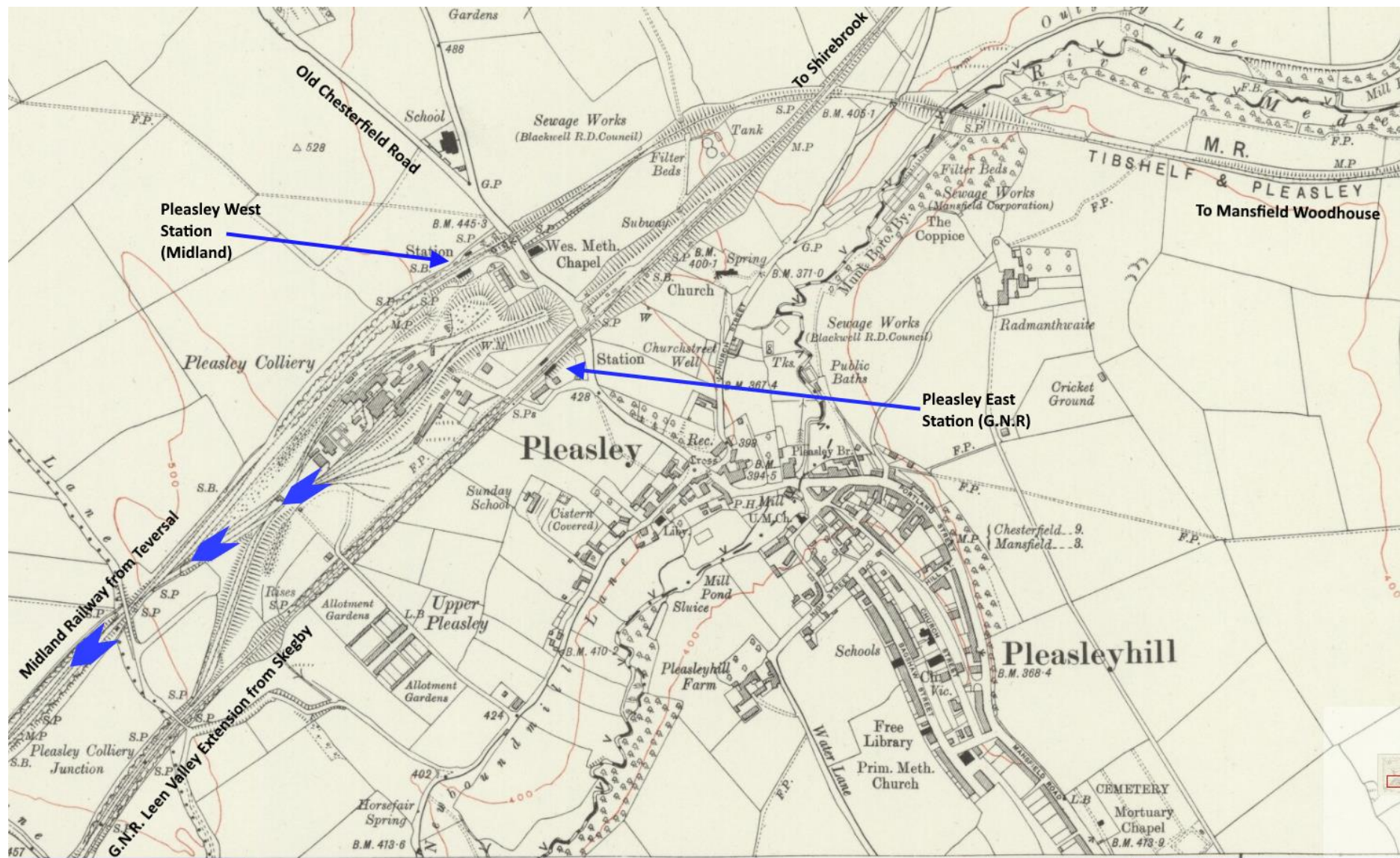
downcast air vent for the Shirebrook mine and for access by maintenance workers.

Winding activity ceased at Pleasley during 1983 and demolition of many of the surface buildings began in 1986 halted only when the remaining buildings, the winding houses, chimney and both headstocks were statutorily listed. In 1992 the mine was completely closed down and the shafts infilled and in 1996 the site was scheduled as an ancient monument.

Two railways served Pleasley and, given that the main purpose of each individual railway company was to win the market for transporting coal, it is no surprise that both ran their lines very close to each other which created quite a confusion of lines. The Midland Railway was first by some way followed by The Great Northern and both built railways stations and ran a passenger service: Pleasley West (Midland) and Pleasley East (Great Northern).

Both railway stations were built adjoining the old Chesterfield Road and there is the option later to go in search of what remains of these stations.

Pleasley on the 1914 Map

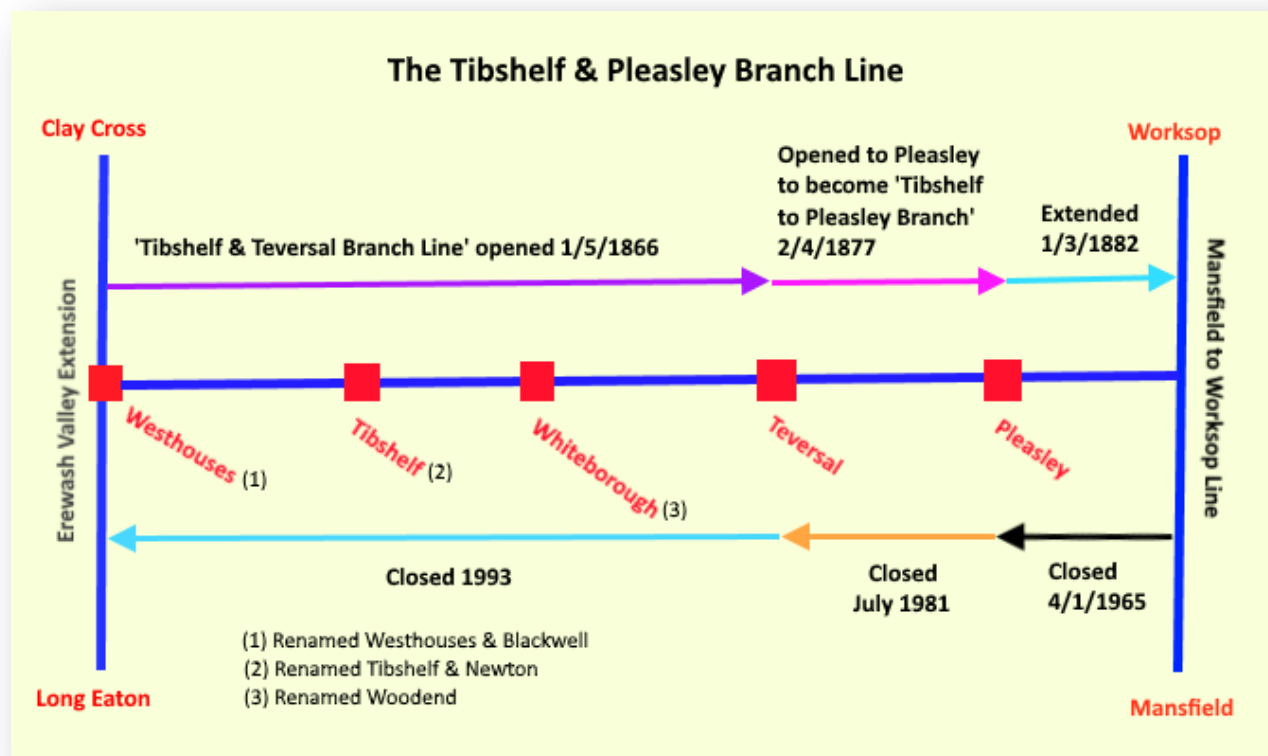


The Walk Two: Pleasley Colliery to junction with the Doe Lea Branch



We walk on from Longhedge lane, initially down to the railway. We are walking on the track bed of the Tibshelf & Pleasley Branch Line. Originally, the line was planned only as far as Teversal and was referred to early on as the Tibshelf & Teversall¹ Branch Line. In the nineteenth century railway companies often built railways in sections and this one was no exception: they built railways as opportunities arose.

Brief History



The diagram above tells the story of the construction of this line. The top set of arrows point to the right and this was the direction of opening with the lower arrows giving the stages of closure.

The Midland Railway built this branch line in anticipation of the sinking of Silverhill and Teversal Collieries (The line was ready one year before the first of the collieries opened – during a period which has been described as “coal fever”.) When Pleasley opened the railway was extended there. A short third section was added, linking this railway to the Midlands Mansfield to Worksop Line at a point near Mansfield Woodhouse, thereby enabling a passenger service (see timetable later). When it opened, a special branch line was built to serve Sutton Colliery (1874) (originally also known as ‘New Skegby Colliery’).

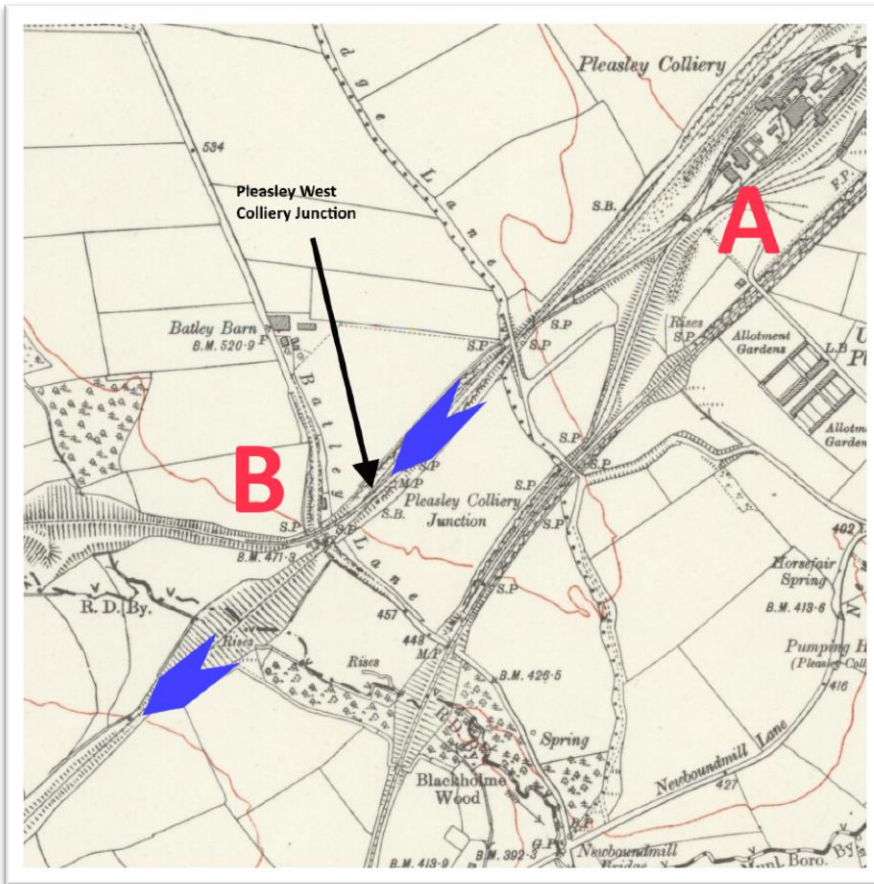
At the time of building, the Midland was in the fortunate position of having a series of railways they could use to get into this new territory. Here, the Erewash Extension, running off the Nottingham to Derby line at Long Eaton and finishing at Clay Cross, provided the perfect starting point for our line at Westhouses (later Westhouses and Blackwell).

The company acted as if it had the sole rights to build railways in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire and vigorously attacked any opposition. Later in the walk we come across its main opponent in this area: The Great Northern Railway.

Our walk is restricted to the second section of the line: from Pleasley to Teversal, but it is now possible to walk the first opened section.

¹ Note: until relatively recently, what we now call Teversal was referred to as Teversall.

Point B: the Junction with the Doe Lea Branch Line



As you approach the new footbridge over Batley Lane, we are at a point (see map left) known as Pleasley West Colliery Junction.

This is the spot where the Doe Lea Branch Railway joined the Tibshelf to Pleasley.



Go about thirty steps beyond the pedestrian bridge to get a view of the banking of this Doe Lea Railway (now The Rowthorn Trail).

From where we stand, we catch sight of the southern point of this line. As the diagram (next page) shows, it was built in three stages and took twenty four years to complete.

The section from Glapwell to Pleasley West Colliery Junction was the final section to be completed and enabled the Midland Railway to move coal using the Tibshelf & Pleasley. This final section totalling only 2¾ mile and opened on September 1890.

Brief History

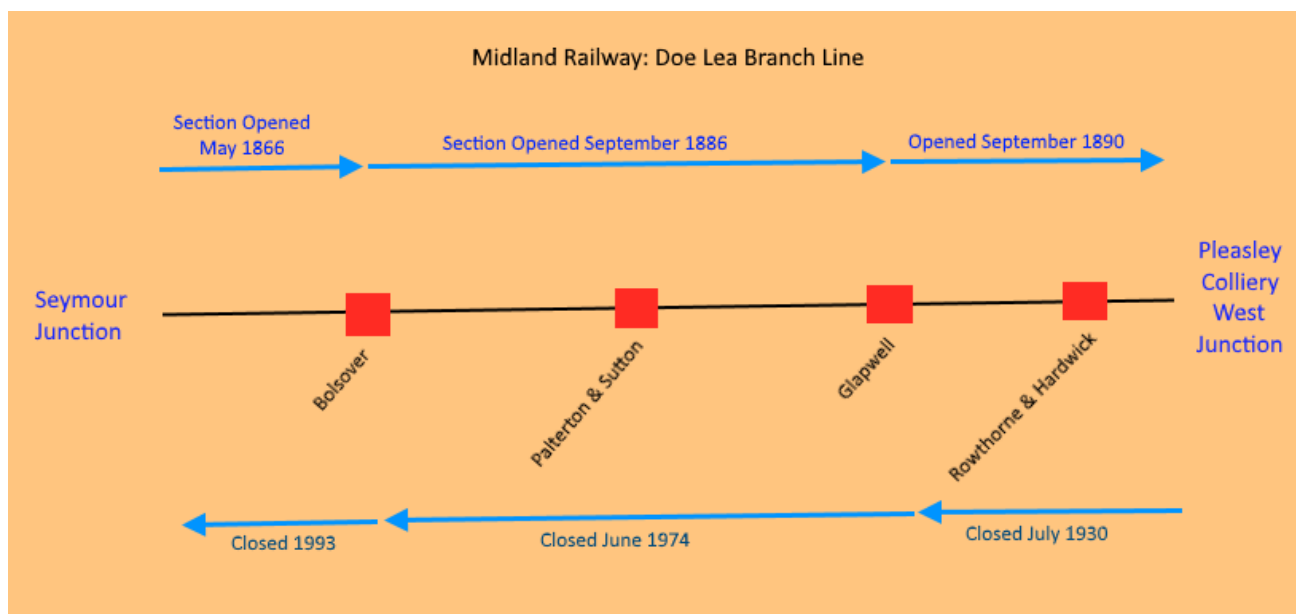
At its most northerly point the Doe Lea Branch ended (or began) at Seymour Junction where it joined, or rather merged into, the Midland Railway's Clown line. This gave the Midland the choice of moving coal North or South. The advantage of the Doe Lea Branch was it allowed the company to move coal very quickly onto the Erewash Valley Extension. Later, as our railway closed, coal would have to move north.

The first two northern sections had been easy to build along what was a gentle slope of the Doe Lea Valley, the only section with any gradient being the approach to Glapwell from the north.

This final section, Glapwell to the Pleasley junction was a very different matter, it presented very large challenges to complete what was less than three miles of railway. It involved boring the only tunnel on the whole route, the Rowthorn Tunnel at 932 yards. This section also involved the only significant gradients on the line, with one long section at 1 in 50.

Hurstⁱ quotes the company engineers report of 16th April 1890, "(building)...had proved very troublesome with a large slip of embankment, slips in cuttings with break walls to keep them up, lengthening of the tunnel necessitated by the slippery nature or the round will account for the excess cost over the contract."

The Midland had become interested in the possibility of passenger traffic and so, as they built this final section, they also took the opportunity to bring the entire line up to passenger carrying standards.



MIDLAND RAILWAY.
OPENING
DOE LEA EXTENSION
BRANCH.

ON MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 1ST,
this Branch will be opened for Passenger traffic, and a Service of
Trains will be run between MANSFIELD and CHESTERFIELD,
calling at Stations on the New Line as shewn below:---

		WEEKDAYS.			
		a.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.
MANSFIELD	- dep.	7.40	1.30	5.0	6.50
Mansfield Woodhouse	- "	7.44	1.34	5.4	6.54
Pleasley	- "	7.52	1.42	5.12	7.2
Rowthorn and Hardwick	- "	7.56	1.46	5.16	7.6
Palterton and Sutton	- "	8.5	1.55	5.25	7.15
Bolsover	- "	8.8	1.58	5.28	7.18
Netherthorpe	- "	8.15	2.5	5.35	7.25
Staveley	- arr.	8.20	2.10	5.40	7.30
Do.	- dep.	8.25	2.30	5.51	7.40
Whittington	- "	8.30	2.35	5.56	7.44
CHESTERFIELD	- arr.	8.35	2.42	6.2	7.50

		WEEKDAYS.			
		a.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.
CHESTERFIELD	- dep.	8.5	2.40	5.8	8.20
Whittington	- "	8.10	2.45	5.14	8.26
Staveley	- arr.	8.15	2.49	5.17	8.30
Do.	- dep.	8.28	2.55	5.53	8.35
Netherthorpe	- "	8.32	2.59	5.57	8.39
Bolsover	- "	8.39	3.6	6.4	8.47
Palterton and Sutton	- "	8.42	3.9	6.7	8.51
Rowthorn and Hardwick	- "	8.51	3.18	6.16	9.0
Pleasley	- "	8.56	3.23	6.21	9.8
Mansfield Woodhouse	- "	9.3	3.30	6.28	9.16
MANSFIELD	- arr.	9.8	3.37	6.34	9.22

NOTE.--Passengers change carriages at Staveley.
For particulars of connecting Trains at Mansfield and Chesterfield, see the Company's
Time-Tables and Bills, dated for July, August, and September.
JOHN NOBLE, General-Manager.
Derby, August 18th, 1890.

Doe Lea Valley services from Mansfield to Staveley via Pleasley and Netherthorpe started on 1st September 1890 (see poster left which gives the first timetable). The journey took forty minutes and there were connections for Chesterfield at Staveley. New stations opened at Rowthorn & Hardwick, Palterton & Sutton and Bolsover, with Glapwell joining them on 1st September 1892, after representations by local residents.

Its opening meant that residents of Pleasley had two passenger carrying lines: the Tibshelf to Pleasley and the Doe Lea Branch, both Midland Railway. They could travel to Chesterfield on one line and to Alfreton on the other – Mansfield was served by both. Travelling to Alfreton opened up the possibility of travel to London amongst other places. Ten years later, the opening of the G.N.R. station at Pleasley offered further rail services – Nottingham at one end, Shirebrook at the other.

The Doe Lea Valley still had three trains each way in 1930, but they were losing money. On 28th July 1930 this lower part of the line closed as far as Glapwell to all traffic – it was less than forty years after it opened. Following closure, the Rowthorn Tunnel was initially used as a mushroom farm; then for storing ammunition

Hurst, p76

and was finally filled in.

This lower section of the line is now open for walkers: starting from this Pleasley West Junction to just north of the Hardwick & Rowthorn station – walking ends at a point near the start of the Rowthorn Tunnel.

The Walk Three: The Doe Lea Branch to Teversal



We continue our walk towards Teversal, still on the Tibshelf & Pleasley Line. The 1914 map is interesting for it shows how little this part of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire has changed over this last one hundred years. Norwood is over to our right. When I was young motorcycle scrambling was televised by ITV on many a Sunday afternoon. It quite spoilt the woods for a number of years but they have now just about recovered.

Beyond Norwood, not on the map, is Hardwick Hall. Hardwick had a railway station on the Doe Lea Extension, Rowthorn and Hardwick station.

This is quite a steep section in railway terms. The section from Pleasley to Teversal gains 50ft in height (Pleasley is 450ft and Teversal 500) in places the ascent is 1 in 60.

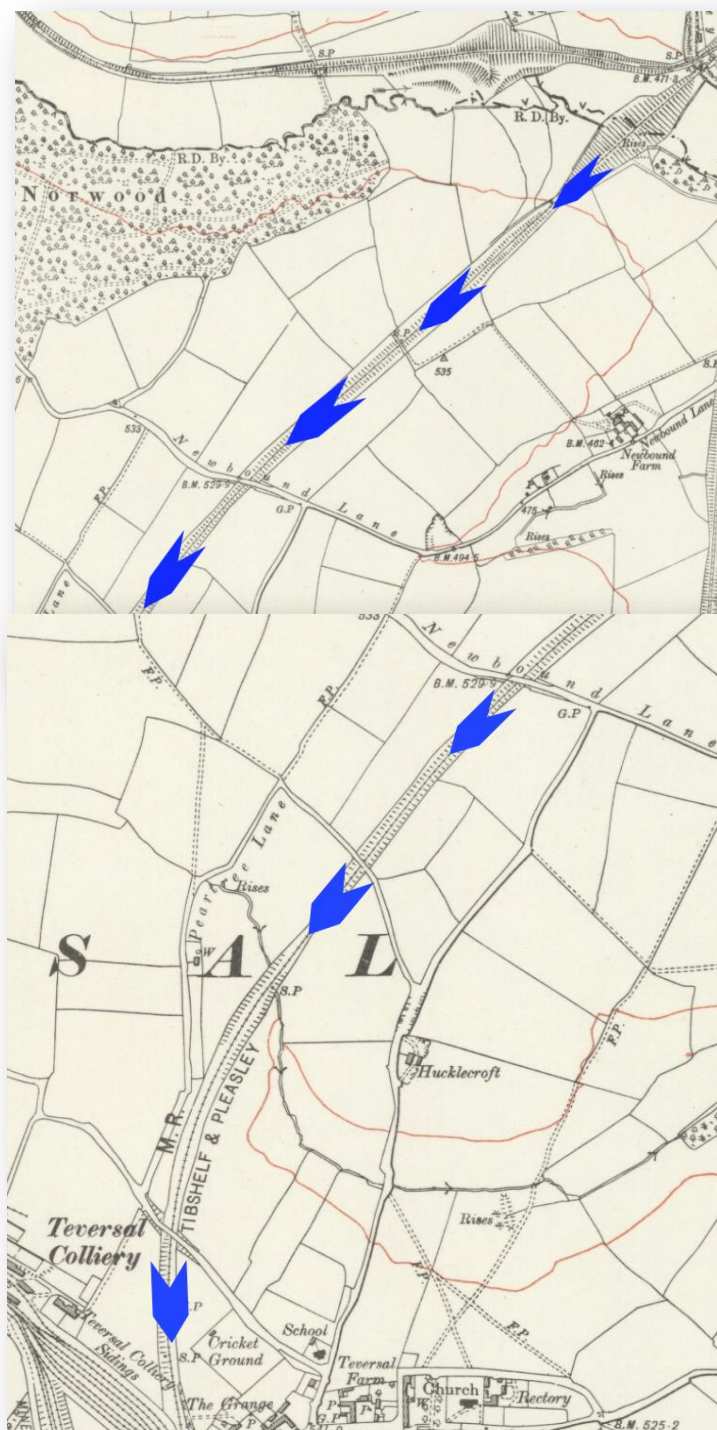
As we approach our next point of interest, **C** on the walk map, we get quite close to Teversal old village. This is quite separate from the new Teversal (often referred to on old maps as Fackley) which until the late 19th century was simply a line of houses along the road.

The old village, in contrast, is mentioned in the Domesday Book when it was referred to as Tevershall.

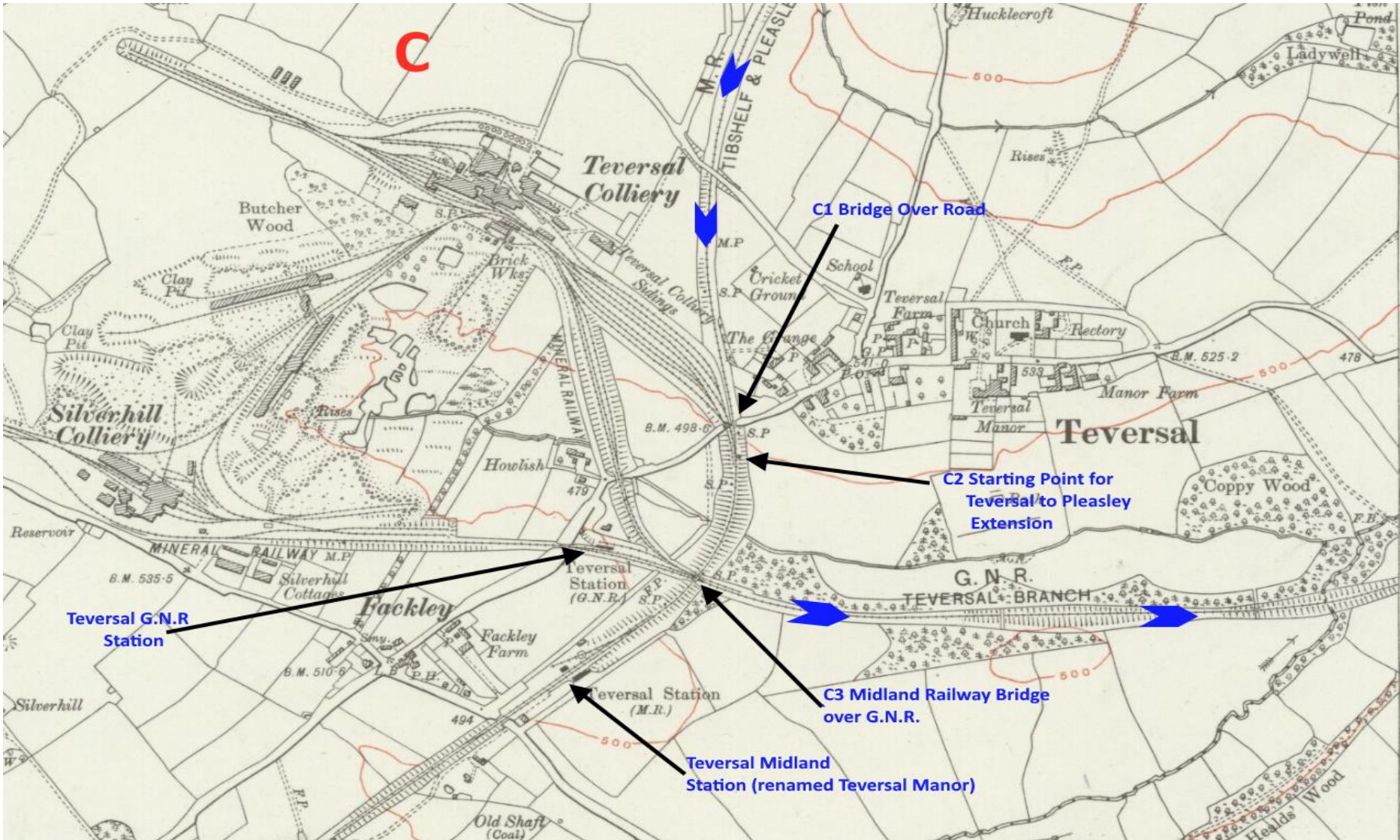
The village was closely associated with the Molyneux from the sixteenth century. This family developed close ties with mining dating back to the early 18th century.

During the 1860s, when local mines were being made on a large scale, the village of Teversal comprised only 69 houses and 351 inhabitants.

Teversal Manor is widely considered to be the basis of the fictional Wragby Hall in D.H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover*.



Point C: Teversal 1914





C1 Pause at the bridge which crosses the road. If you peer over the right hand side of the bridge you will see the remains of a second bridge which carried the line into Teversal Colliery. The bridge you stand on was built when the Westhouse to Teversall line was extended to Pleasley. Take a look at the 1914 Map above; you can clearly see the line flowing into Teversal Colliery Sidings.



C2 Cross over the bridge but pause after about twenty steps. You are at the point where the extension to Pleasley commenced. It was almost a year after the line reached Teversal that the Pleasley section opened (April 1877). The line had one more extension, Pleasley to Mansfield Woodhouse, this opened March 1882.

Brief History

The above map shows both Teversal and Silverhill Colliery as they stood in 1914. The first to be sunk was Teversal Colliery 1867 – closed 1980. This mine was known locally as Butcher Wood and if you look at the map you will see that the colliery was sunk where the wood of that name stood.

Silverhill Colliery was initially seen as an extension of Teversal Colliery and appears in early documents as “Teversall No.2”. It was opened 1875-78 and similarly to Teversal named after the area known as Silverhill Woods on which it was located. It closed in 1993. Once Silverhill closed, there was no need for a railway and this marked the end of this Tibshelf to Pleasley Line.

Teversal had two railway stations, the Midland and the G.N.R and the location of these is marked on the map (these are dealt with later).



C3 Walk onwards to where the path takes a sudden dip. This dip was created when the bridge which carried the Midland Railway over the Great Northern Railway's Teversal Branch was demolished.

The first image on the next page presents us with the view from the Midland Bridge looking down onto the Great Northern Track as it went in the direction of Teversal and Silverhill Collieries. The Bridge was only recently demolished and this resulted in considerable earth moving to maintain the footpaths. To get a sense of what the image shows, it is best to stand on the higher ground to the other side of the dip. Even so, the hedges & undergrowth have grown considerably since this photograph was taken.

The Great Northern is now very difficult to spot due to the considerable alterations that have been made over time, but still stands. You can easily identify the Station Masters house if you look for the front gable: through all the changes to the house the detail on the gable has not changed (see image next page).



The above image attempts to explain what you would have seen when the G.N.R. railway was operating. Much has changed but it is fascinating to try to work out how the current scene relates to the picture. A good idea, to get the perspective, is to look for the roof of the Station Masters House, you might have to move along the railway a little. Much changed but the roof gives it away. Once you find this then it does get a little easier to put things in place.

Finding what remains of the station takes some detective work but there is a newish path that does give you a view.



Walk further along the Midland Railway in the direction of Teversal and you come to a toy version of Teversal Station.

Brief History

The Midland Railway and Great Northern were fierce rivals for coal transport from these two collieries – competition encouraged for very obvious reasons by the coal owners.

The Midland Arrived at Teversal first (1866), thirty one years before its rival. It took considerable pressure to force the Midland to allow the Great Northern access to these mines. The G.N.R. Teversal Branch, running from Skegby, initially to Silverhill only, opened February 1897.

Of the two railway stations at Teversal, the Midland (which eventually became known as Teversal Manor Railway Station) was the most used.

In terms of architecture, I have seen the Midland stations along this line described as Country Style but I think the description “Twin Pavilions” seems to capture it better. All stations were built with similar elements. The image at the top of the following page shows this Teversal Midland Station.



Below is the first timetable for this line. Passengers could travel from Mansfield to Alfreton with a total of six stations in between, including Pleasley. Four trains a day ran both week days and Saturday.

Passenger services were withdrawn on 28th July 1930. In 1923 the Midland Railway had been forcibly grouped with other companies into the London, Midland and Scottish Railway (LMS) and they declared passenger services to be

uneconomic due to the competition from bus services.

Weekdays	am	am	SX pm	SO pm	SX pm	SO pm	Weekdays	am	am	SX pm	SO pm	pm
MANSFIELD	715	937	115	155	640	730	ALFRETON	838	1110	243	243	829
MANSFIELD W/HOUSE	719	941	119	159	644	734	WESTHOUSES & BLACKWELL	842	1115	247	257	834
PLEASLEY	728	950	128	2 8	653	743	TIBSHELF & NEWTON	847	1119	252	3 2	839
TEVERSALL	735	957	135	215	7 0	750	WOODEND	851	1124	256	3 6	843
WOODEND	740	10 2	140	220	7 5	755	TEVERSALL	856	1129	3 1	311	848
TIBSHELF & NEWTON	744	10 6	144	224	7 9	759	PLEASLEY	9 2	1136	3 8	318	855
WESTHOUSES & BLACKWELL	749	1011	149	229	714	8 4	MANSFIELD W/HOUSE	911	1144	318	326	9 2
ALFRETON	752	1015	152	233	717	8 7	MANSFIELD	917	1150	322	332	9 9

The first passenger timetable (1886) (Hurst p61)

The Great Northern station at Teversal was not very well used for there was never a scheduled passenger service on this line. Occasional excursion trains would run and most authors talk of miners 'Paddy' trains, special trains put on to get miners to work and home.

I worked at Silverhill for ten years from 1964 and can't recall any of these trains running. Personally, a regular bus service was in place to take me to work and bring me home, and this was extremely convenient. A train might only drop you off at either Skegby or Sutton station but the bus could drop you at the top of the street – or half way up Anchor Hill for Fred Parr to have his three pints before going home. Silverhill miners had no easy way to get to the G.N.R station. Perhaps in the early days, before the convenience of a bus service these Paddy trains did run but not in my time or in the time of anyone I have asked.

The timetable below (1869) precedes passenger traffic and instead timetables the coal and good trains that came across the line before the extension to Pleasley. When this timetable was produced, Teversal Colliery was only two years old, the opening of Silverhill was still six years away and Pleasley ten and Sutton Colliery was five years in the distance.

The left hand side of the timetable show the times of empty wagon trains heading towards the collieries served by the lines. We see three empty wagon trains a day and, unsurprisingly, three full ones returning; the first empty one leaving Tibshelf at 09.10. The collieries served at that time were: Tibshelf, Diminsdale, Skegby Colliery² and Teversall.

² Both Skegby Colliery and Diminsdale could not be counted as "modern" collieries. They were small scale affairs. For example, Skegby produced only 200 tons of coal a week in 1850 (Griffin p29). Neither survived into the 20th Century.

Midland Railway.

NOTTINGHAM AND MANSFIELD, TIBSHELF & TEVERSALL, AND EREWASH VALLEY BRANCHES. DECEMBER, 1869, and until further notice.

Trains do NOT STOP at the Stations marked with SMALL FIGURES, unless marked thus * where they are liable to stop for Water only.
Trains STOP at Stations opposite which the LETTER "C" is shewn between the Hour and Minute Figures to attach or detach Cattle, when required.
Trains BOOKED at Stations in LARGE FIGURES and marked with an ASTERISK, stop to SHUNT for other Trains, and not to attach or detach Traffic.

TIBSHELF to TEVERSALL. TEVERSALL to TIBSHELF.

Distance.	STATIONS.	1	2	3	Distance.	STATIONS.	4	5	6
		Goods & Empty Wagons.	Goods & Empty Wagons.	Goods & Empty Wagons.			Goods & Coal.	Goods & Coal.	Goods & Coal.
		a.m.	a.m.	p.m.			a.m.	p.m.	p.m.
..	TIBSHELF JUNCTION dep.	9 10	11 30	2 0		TEVERSALL Colliery .....dep.	9 55	12 15	..
1½	Newton Road.....	..	11 38	2 14	1½	TEVERSALL .....	..	12 25	3 15
..	Tibshelf Colliery .....	..	11 45	2 24	..	Skegby Colliery	10 10	..	3 25
1½	Chambers' Siding	9 25	11 50	2 35	..	Chambers' Dimsdale Siding ..	..	..	3 30
..	Chambers' Dimsdale Siding ..	..	..	2 45	3	Chambers' Siding	10 25	12 35	3 45
3½	Skegby Colliery.....	9 35	11 55	2 55	..	Tibshelf Colliery .....	..	12 45	3 55
4	TEVERSALL	9 40	12 0	3 0	3½	Newton Road.....	..	..	4 5
4½	Teversall Colliery .....arr.	9 45	12 5	..	4½	TIBSHELF JUNCTION..arr.	10 35	1 0	4 15

- 1 Train, see page 89, Train 25.
 2 Train, see page 91, Train 47.
 3 Train, see page 91, Train 53.
 4, 5 and 6 Trains, must stop at Dimsdale between Skegby and Chambers' Collieries, and pin down Breaks before descending the Incline.
 4 Train, see page 98, Train 37.
 5 Train, see page 98, Train 43½.
 6 Train, see page 100, Train 62. Returns to Teversall if required.

Below is the timetable for the line in 1922 showing the passenger service reduced to three trains from Mansfield to Pye Bridge and four in the other direction on week days only.

MANSFIELD, ALFRETON AND SOUTH NORMANTON, and PYE BRIDGE

	Week Days				Week Days			
	mrn	aft	aft		mrn	mrn	aft	aft
Mansfield.....dep	6.55	2.00	5.15	Pye Bridge.....dep	7.45	10.25	3.10	6.42
Mansfield Woodhouse	6.59	2.04	5.19	Alfreton & South Normanton	7.52	10.32	3.30	6.49
Pleasley	7.09	2.14	5.29	Westhouses & Blackwell	7.56	10.37	3.34	6.53
Teversall	7.17	2.22	5.37	Tibshelf & Newton	8.02	10.43	3.40	6.59
Whiteboro'	7.23	2.28	5.43	Whiteboro'	8.07	10.48	3.45	7.04
Tibshelf & Newton	7.27	2.32	5.47	Teversall	8.13	10.54	3.50	7.10
Westhouses & Blackwell	7.32	2.37	5.52	Pleasley	8.22	11.03	4.00	7.20
Alfreton & South Normanton	7.35	2.40	5.56	Mansfield Woodhouse	8.31	11.12	4.10	7.29
Pye Bridge.....arr	8.01	3.36	6.03	Mansfield.....arr	8.34	11.16	4.13	7.32

Timetable 1922 (Bradshaw)

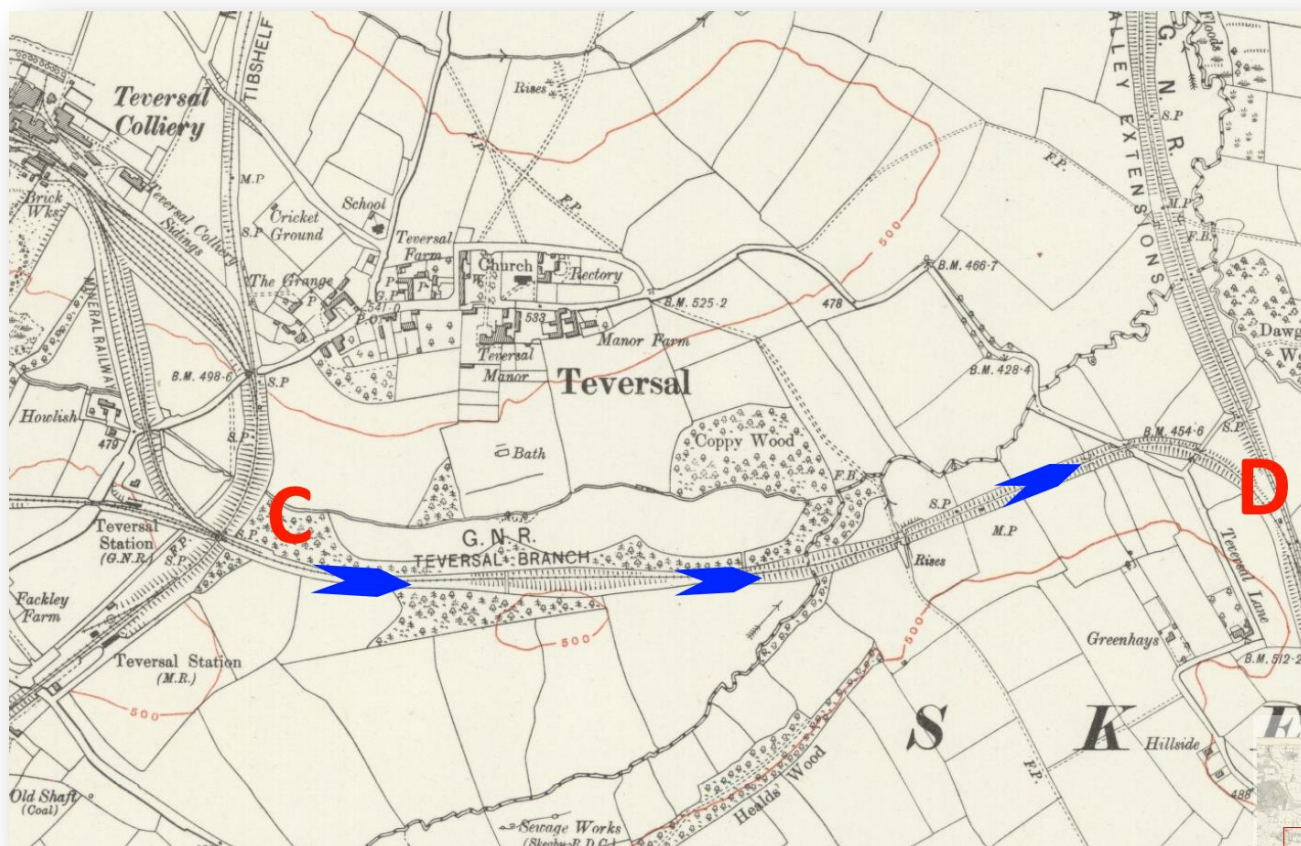


When you've finished looking at the reconstructed Teversal Station, walk back to where there is a dip in the line (the bridge over the Great Northern Railway if you recall) and then walk in the direction of the Teversal Visitors Centre, staying on the main path. When you are in line with the path to that centre, stop and look back using the image below for a guide to what you would have seen when the railways were operating. The image below was taken on a rail tour, hence the invasion of the tracks and bridge. It perfectly shows the Midland Railway Bridge over the G.N.R. The photograph was taken on the right hand side of the G.N.R. Teversal Branch line



from Skegby. Through the bridge you can clearly see the G.N.R. station (with a passenger train carrying the enthusiasts – this is the line to Silverhill Colliery) with the Teversal Colliery lines going to the right.

The Walk Four: The G.N.R. Teversal Branch to Skegby



We are now standing on the Great Northern Railway's Teversal Branch Line. We walk down this to Skegby Junction.

Brief History

The Great Northern and Midland were at constant war with each other in the nineteenth century over the rights to carry coal. It wasn't until the Annesley Tunnel was dug³ that the G.N.R. could find a way into our area but it wasn't initially easy to cut a way through the limestone at what became Kirkby South Junction and a temporary measure had to be put in place before they could make a dash to scoop up the coal from Kirkby Colliery and on to Skegby. This Teversal branch line was laid very quickly, so that by February 1897 coal was being carried down it, initially from Silverhill only.

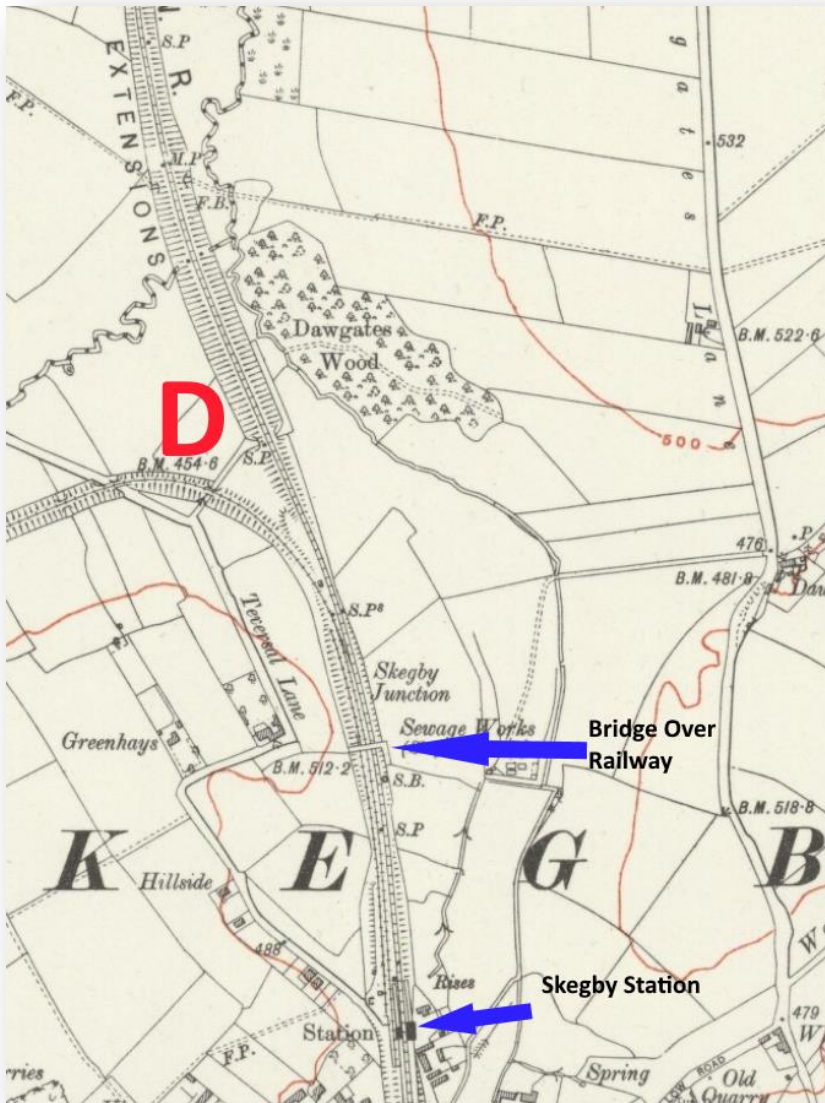
The Visitors Centre is located in the car park of what was built as Teversal Miners Welfare (now demolished). Our 1914 map shows that neither the welfare nor the streets of houses existed at that time (I've read that the Welfare was built in 1918). It was all fields. A little further on, on the hill to the right, is the Healds Wood housing estate but our map shows only the original wood.



This section begins more or less on level but soon goes down a shallow cutting. As this ends our views improve. We eventually cross over a road, Teversal Lane, just before reaching Skegby Junction and it is worth looking down on to this for it is in the process of being taken back by nature. Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust has acquired some of the local fields and one, more or less below you to the left, is particularly fine in summer now they've returned it to a traditional flower meadow. We eventually reach Skegby Junction.

³ The tunnel was dug by The Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway. The G.N.R. was given rights to use it – always in exchange for something else – that is how the railway companies worked!

Point D: Skegby Junction & Railway System



We now find ourselves on the G.N.R Leen Valley Extension Railway. The Leen Valley is roughly located between Nottingham and Annesley and the G.N.R built a railway along it which they called The Leen Valley Railway. When they came to build towards Skegby they regarded it as an extension of that line, hence the name it was given.

Work began on the line in June 1895, by September 1896 coal was transported from Kirkby Colliery but progress from then onwards was slow, explained to the board in November 1896 as being caused by the weather and in January 1897 it was, "owing to the holidays and want of energy by the contractor during December".

But eventually, on 9 February 1897 the line was open for traffic from Silverhill Colliery.

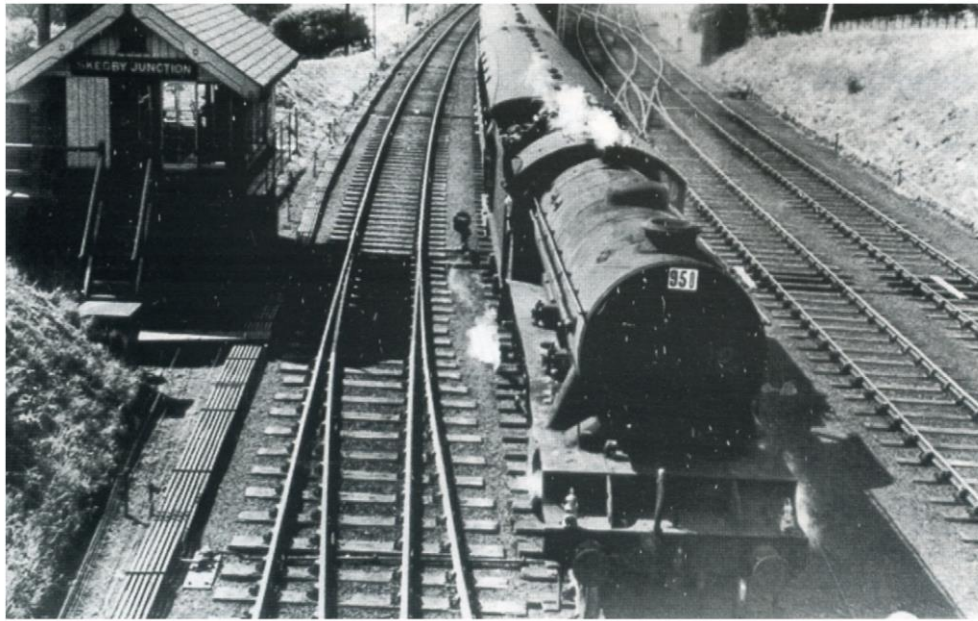
The contract for stations at Sutton, Skegby and Teversal was not awarded until April 1897.

By the April of 1898 the line was open between Kirkby and Pleasley for coal and goods. The section between Skegby and Pleasley was initially only a single line created quickly to oblige the Stanton Company who had sunk Pleasley Colliery. Double line working started on the 12 October that year.



Strict Walk Instructions

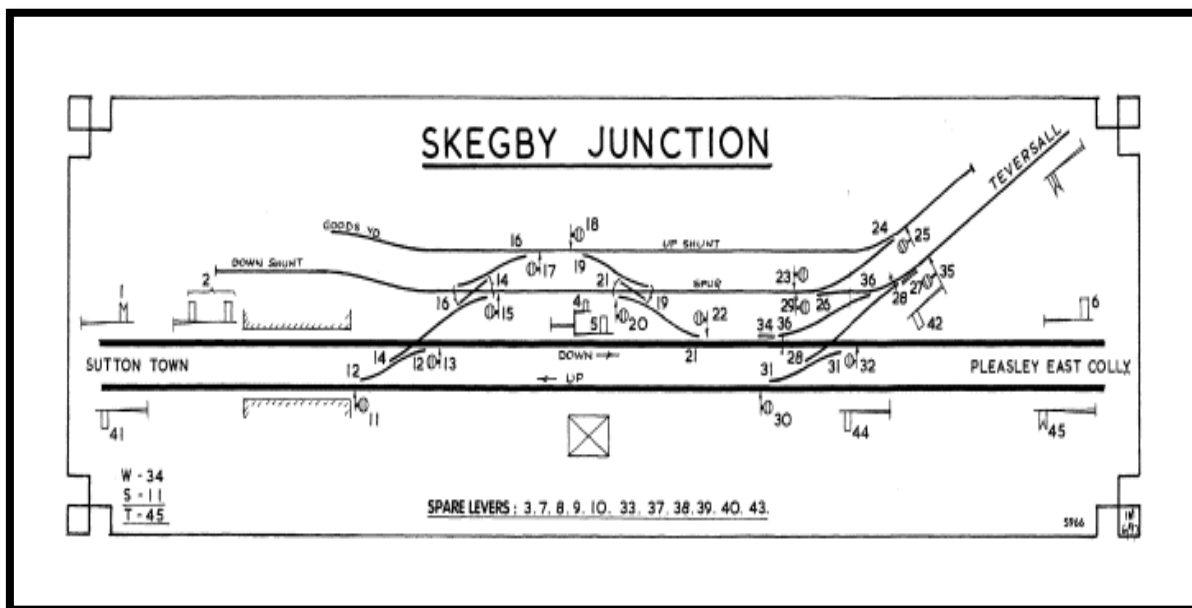
On our map (above) notice that the bridge you see in front of you is marked. We need to walk towards it so that we are standing just the other side of it on the left hand side. **Do this before turning over.** Once standing just the other side of the bridge, turn to the next page.



Henshaw, p93

Sutton.

This photograph was taken from the banking next to where you stand and is very interesting for it shows us the old signal box (marked SB just below the bridge on the map). You can also see (on the left hand rail – or up line) the points for the junction with the Teversal Branch Line. Over on the right of the picture is the Skegby sidings. The station is just out of sight in this picture. This train is heading in the down direction (towards Pleasley). The left hand rails (Up) head in the direction of



You will find the base of the signal box a few steps in front of you on your left.

The above plan of Skegby Junction (note it must be early for Teversal retains its old spelling) give us the layout of the junction, with all of the points, the signals etc.



Walk instructions

Walk another thirty steps and then turn around and look at the picture on the next page.

Skegby Junction 14th August 1965, (Anderson & Cupit, p60)



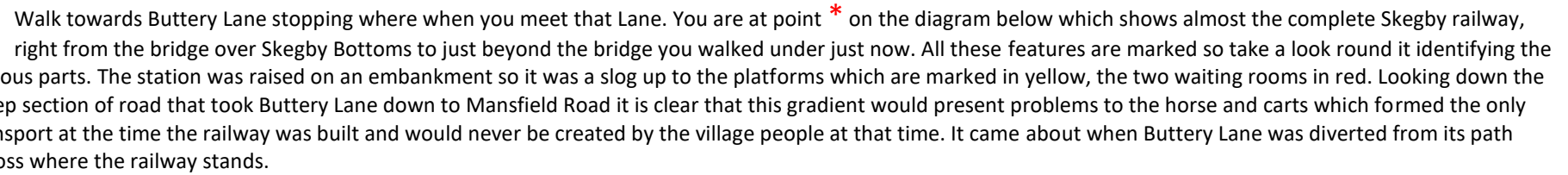
This photograph looks back to the bridge and gives us a good view of the signal box and its construction. Under the bridge you can just see a signal.

For the next image, (below) you need to turn round for this view shows us Skegby Railway from the other direction. It was a lot clearer of trees and long grass when this was taken. The building on the left is the Station Masters House (still standing – note from the gable that is identical to the Station Masters House we saw at Teversal).

In this image, the waiting room has been removed from the station. The

houses on Buttery Lane (right of the picture) are still identifiable.





When the railway at Skegby was planned, a goods yard was included consisting of a shunt siding to hold 20 wagons, loco and brake van plus a smaller sidings plus dock and cattle pen.

The coming of the railway had a profound effect on Skegby Village. It refocussed the village to some extent. What became known as 'Station Yard' (I was born in Station Yard in a row of cottages that used to stand more or less in front of the Station Masters house) was an important part of the village but lost this when Buttery Lane was diverted.

Also, the high embankment built next to the houses so the railway might run level, served to cut off this area and isolate it from the village.

Skegby Station, May 1950, (Henshaw, p91)



Passenger services to and from Nottingham, through Sutton-in-Ashfield to Skegby began quite early in the life of the railway, on April the 4th 1898 (initially, on week days there were 7 trains a day from Nottingham as far as Skegby and six running the other way with an extra on Saturdays. In addition to these, there were also two each way to Sutton). In the early days in particular, the timetable changed regularly as the railway company tried to determine how many passengers would use its services. Also, as the railway was completed as far as Shirebrook, that town become the start and end point for passenger services

Goods traffic had been carried from Skegby since the first of March 1898ⁱⁱ: Pleasley and Shirebrook opened for goods 3 August 1901 and passenger traffic from Novemberⁱⁱⁱ

In the above image of the station you can see the bridge we walked under together with the signal box. At this time the station was called, Skegby and Stanton Hill station and you can see a little of this on the notice.

On the following page is a timetable from 1898 showing the first timetable for the line. The railway sidings at Skegby would enable the loco to change ends but there was never a turntable at Skegby so the loco would have to come in head first and return to Nottingham tender first.

The service to and from Nottingham was rather complicated for there were two ways in and out of the city for G.N.R. trains. When Nottingham Victoria Station opened in May 1900 that made three. The majority of trains for Skegby ran on what was known as The Nottingham Suburban Railway.

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY.

LEEN VALLEY EXTENSION RAILWAY

PASSENGER TRAIN SERVICE

(INCLUDING THE SERVICE ON THE NOTTINGHAM SUBURBAN LINE),

1st JULY until 30th SEPTEMBER, 1898.

DOWN.		WEEK-DAYS.																	SUNDAYS.		
		a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	noon.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	Weds. and Sats. only.			a.m.	p.m.
NOTTINGHAM	dep.	5 30	7 45	8 30	9 5	9 40	11 15	12 5	12 55	2 45	3 15	4 43	5 40	6 5	7 5	8 40	11 20	...	...	9 35	8 20.
NETHERFIELD	"	5 36	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	9 41	8 26
GEDLING	"	...	7 49	...	9 9	...	11 19	12 9	12 59	2 49	3 19	4 47	5 44	6 9	7 9	8 44	...	...	...	9 45	8 30
THORNEYWOOD	"	...	7 52	...	9 12	...	11 22	12 12	1 2	2 52	3 22	4 50	5 47	6 12	7 12	8 47	...	...	...	...	...
ST ANN'S WELL	"	...	7 55	...	9 15	...	11 25	12 15	1 5	2 55	3 25	4 53	5 50	6 15	7 15	8 50	...	...	...	...	...
SHERWOOD	"	...	7 58	...	9 19	9 51	11 29	12 19	1 9	2 59	3 29	4 57	5 53	6 19	7 19	8 54	11 31	...	...	...	8 37
DAYBROOK	"	5 51	7 58	8 41	9 19	9 51	11 29	12 19	1 9	2 59	3 29	4 57	5 53	6 19	7 19	8 54	11 31	...	...	...	...
BULWELL FOREST	"	5 57	...	...	9 25	...	11 35	...	1 15	3 5	...	5 3	...	...	7 25	...	...	...	...	9 59	8 44
BESTWOOD	"	6 0	...	...	9 28	...	11 38	...	1 18	3 8	...	5 6	...	...	7 28	9 1	11 38	...	...	10 2	8 47
BUTLER'S HILL	"	6 3	...	...	9 31	...	11 41	...	1 21	3 11	...	5 9	...	...	7 31	9 4	11 41	...	...	10 5	8 50
HUCKNALL	"	6 6	...	8 50	9 34	10 0	11 44	...	1 24	3 14	...	5 12	...	6 28	7 34	9 7	11 44	...	...	10 9	8 54
LINBY	"	6 17	...	...	9 38	...	11 48	...	1 28	3 18	...	5 16	...	...	7 38	9 11	11 48	...	...	10 13	8 58
NEWSTEAD	arr.	6 22	...	8 57	9 42	10 7	11 52	...	1 32	3 22	...	5 20	...	6 34	7 42	9 15	11 52	...	...	10 22	9 7
SUTTON-IN-ASHFIELD	"	...	...	9 6	...	10 16	12 1	...	1 41	3 31	...	5 29	...	6 43	7 51	9 24	12 1	...	...	...	...
SKEGBY	"	...	...	9 10	...	10 21	12 5	...	1 45	3 35	...	...	...	6 48	7 56	9 29	12 5	...	...	...	...

UP.		WEEK-DAYS.																	SUNDAYS.			
		a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	Sats. only.	p.m.	Fridays excepted.	p.m.	Fridays only.	p.m.	Sats. only.	p.m.	p.m.	a.m.	p.m.	
SKEGBY	dep.	...	...	8 5	...	...	10 15	12 20	...	2 2	...	4 10	...	...	...	...	...	...	8 30	...	10 45	9 25
SUTTON-IN-ASHFIELD	"	6 55	...	8 9	...	...	10 19	12 24	...	2 6	...	4 14	...	...	...	...	...	...	8 34	...	10 54	9 34
NEWSTEAD	"	7 4	...	8 18	...	9 55	...	12 33	...	2 15	...	...	4 45	...	5 0	5 54	...	...	8 38	...	10 58	9 38
LINBY	"	7 8	...	...	...	9 59	...	12 37	...	2 19	...	...	4 49	...	5 4	5 58	...	...	8 41	...	11 2	9 42
HUCKNALL	"	7 11	...	8 24	...	10 3	10 33	12 41	...	2 23	...	4 29	...	4 53	...	5 8	6 2	...	8 45	...	11 5	9 45
BUTLER'S HILL	"	7 14	...	...	...	10 6	...	12 44	...	2 26	...	...	4 56	...	5 11	6 5	...	...	8 48	...	11 8	9 48
BESTWOOD	"	7 17	...	...	...	10 9	...	12 47	...	2 29	...	...	4 59	...	5 14	6 8	...	...	8 51	...	11 8	9 48
BULWELL FOREST	"	7 20	...	...	...	10 12	...	12 50	...	2 32	...	...	5 4	...	5 19	6 11	...	...	8 54	...	11 8	9 48
DAYBROOK	"	7 26	8 15	8 33	9 10	10 18	10 42	12 56	1 58	2 38	3 0	4 38	5 14	5 14	5 43	6 17	6 57	7 15	9 6	...	11 17	9 57
SHERWOOD	"	...	8 18	...	9 13	10 21	...	12 59	2 1	2 41	...	...	5 17	5 17	...	6 20	7 0	7 18	9 9	...	...	...
ST ANN'S WELL	"	...	8 21	...	9 16	10 24	...	1 2	2 4	2 44	...	...	5 20	5 20	...	6 23	7 3	7 21	9 12	...	...	...
THORNEYWOOD	"	...	8 25	8 41	9 20	10 28	10 51	1 6	2 8	2 48	3 7	4 46	5 24	5 24	...	6 27	7 7	7 25	9 16	...	...	...
GEDLING	"	7 33	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5 50	...	...	...	...	11 24	10 4	
NETHERFIELD	"	7 39	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5 57	...	...	...	...	11 30	10 10	
NOTTINGHAM	arr.	7 45	8 29	8 45	9 24	10 32	10 55	1 10	2 12	2 52	3 11	4 50	5 28	5 28	6 3	6 31	7 11	7 29	9 20	...	11 36	10 16

LONDON, KING'S CROSS STATION,
JUNE, 1898.
(CARD No. 112.)

CHARLES STEEL, General Manager.

WATERLOW & SONS LIMITED PRINTERS, LONDON WALL, LONDON.



The Opening of Skegby Station 1898

The photograph on the left was taken at the opening of the station. My father told me that the old man was a local farmer who wanted to be in the picture (I seem to remember he thought it was Mr Parsons).

The platforms at Skegby have been described as something of a hotchpotch; particularly the up platform and you can see this from the image below.

Passenger services ended on the Leen Valley

Extension on the 14th September 1931. This ending of the service was partly to do with loss of local passenger traffic at the Nottingham stations caused by the growing popularity of trams and buses.

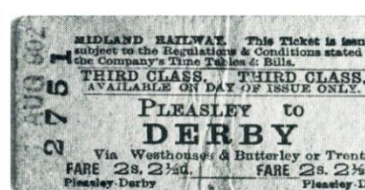
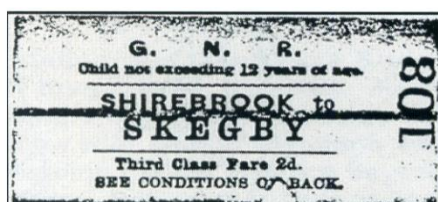
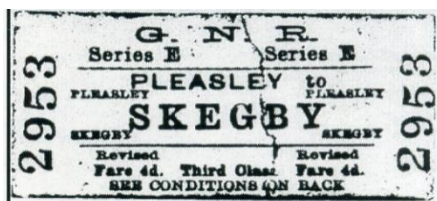
However, regular summer holiday services ran from June 1954 and also football specials. Pages 32 and 33 give examples of special trains running on the line.

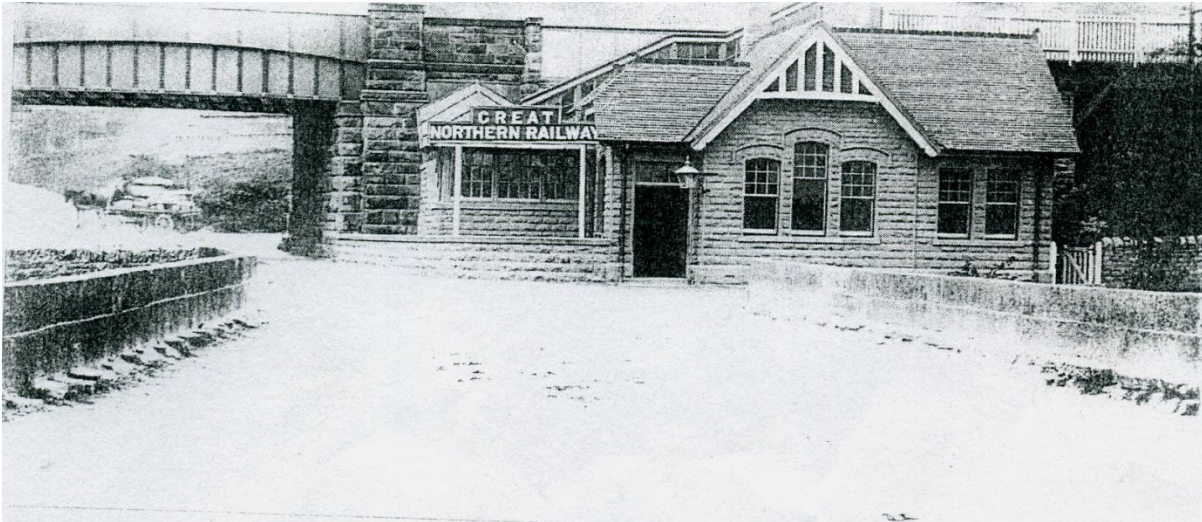
Skegby station was completely closed in 1961 when a claim for compensation was made after a woman damaged a stiletto heel when her shoe slipped between the planks which made up the up platform. The threat of a claim for compensation was enough to close the station.



Henshaw p91

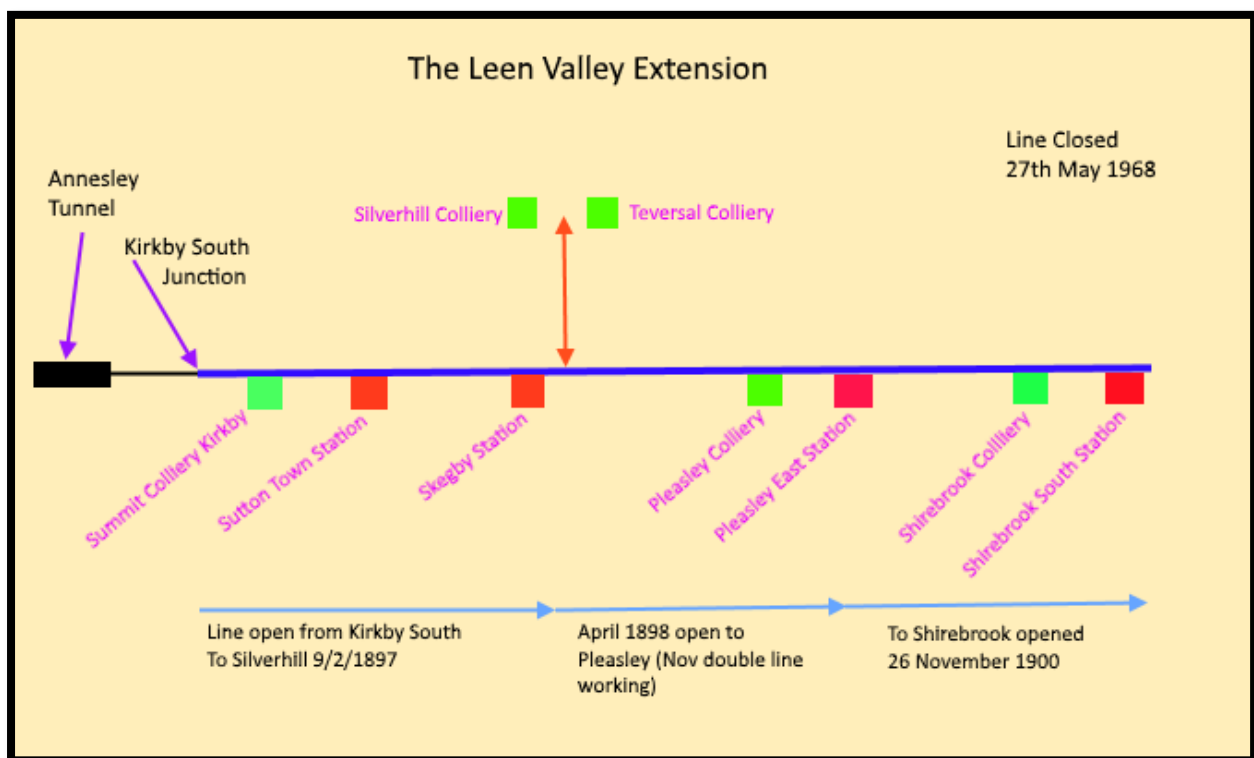
Just so long as the coal mines stayed open then there was a continuing role for the Leen Valley Extension. On pages 36 and 37 we see the life of this railway on one day in 1958 (Monday, December 1st) taken directly from the records kept at Sutton Town Signal Box – one signal box on from Skegby. It's clear that the railway was still carrying considerable traffic right up to that point. When the mines closed it all came to an end!





Skegby Railway Station street level booking office (Henshaw p90)

The ticket office at Skegby was on the right after entering the front door. The bridge over Mansfield Road is clear as is the high embankment platform. The creation of a bridge and high banking rather overshadowed what became Station Yard and isolated it from the rest of the village. Interesting point for local people is the shape of the road.



The diagram above shows the development of the Leen Valley Extension and shows all of the coal mines and passenger stations. The bottom row of arrows show the date of opening of the three stages. There was only one closing date.

Passenger Timetable for the Leen Valley Extension 1922 (Nottingham to Shirebrook)

NOTTINGHAM, NEWSTEAD, and SHIREBROOK (via Suburban Line)

Down	Week Days only.								
	<i>mm</i> ^a	<i>mm</i> ¹	<i>aft</i> ²	<i>aft</i> ³	<i>aft</i> ²	<i>aft</i> ⁴	<i>aft</i> ⁵	<i>aft</i> ⁶	<i>aft</i> ⁵
Nottingham (Victoria).....dep	8.20	11.55	1.20	3.35	5.05	6.40	7.45	9.07	9.43
Nottingham (London Rd.) ‡.....dep	8.28	11.58	1.24	3.39	5.08	6.44	7.49	9.12	9.49
Netherfield	8.34	.....	.....	3.45	.....	.....	7.55	9.18	9.55
Gedling & Carlton	8.39	.....	.....	3.50	.....	.....	7.59	9.22	9.59
Daybrook	8.47	12.08	1.34	3.58	5.18	6.54	8.07	9.30	10.07
Bulwell Forest	8.54	12.15	1.41	.....	5.25	.....	.....	.....	.....
Bestwood Colliery	8.57	12.18	1.44	.....	5.28	7.02	8.15	9.40	10.17
Butler's Hill	9.00	12.21	1.47	.....	5.31	7.05	8.18	9.43	10.20
Hucknall	9.03	12.24	1.50	4.08	5.34	7.08	8.21	9.46	10.23
Newstead	9.09	12.30	1.58	4.14	5.40	7.14	8.27	9.52	10.29
Sutton-in-Ashfield	9.20	12.41	2.09	4.25	5.51	7.25	8.38	10.03	10.40
Skegby	9.23	12.44	2.12	4.28	5.54	7.28	8.41	10.06	10.43
Pleasley	9.28	12.49	2.17	4.33	5.59	7.33	8.46	10.11	10.48
Shirebrook.....arr	9.33	12.54	2.22	4.38	6.04	7.38	8.51	10.16	10.53

¹ Weds. And Sats. Via Thorney wood

² Via Thorney wood

³ Weds. And Sats

⁴ Except Saturday Via Thornley Wood

⁵ Saturdays only

⁶ Except Saturday

^a Passengers from Nottingham (Victoria and High Level) for Leen Valley Line change at Daybrook ‡ High Level

Passenger Timetable for the Leen Valley Extension 1922 (Shirebrook to Nottingham)

NOTTINGHAM, NEWSTEAD, and SHIREBROOK (via Suburban Line)

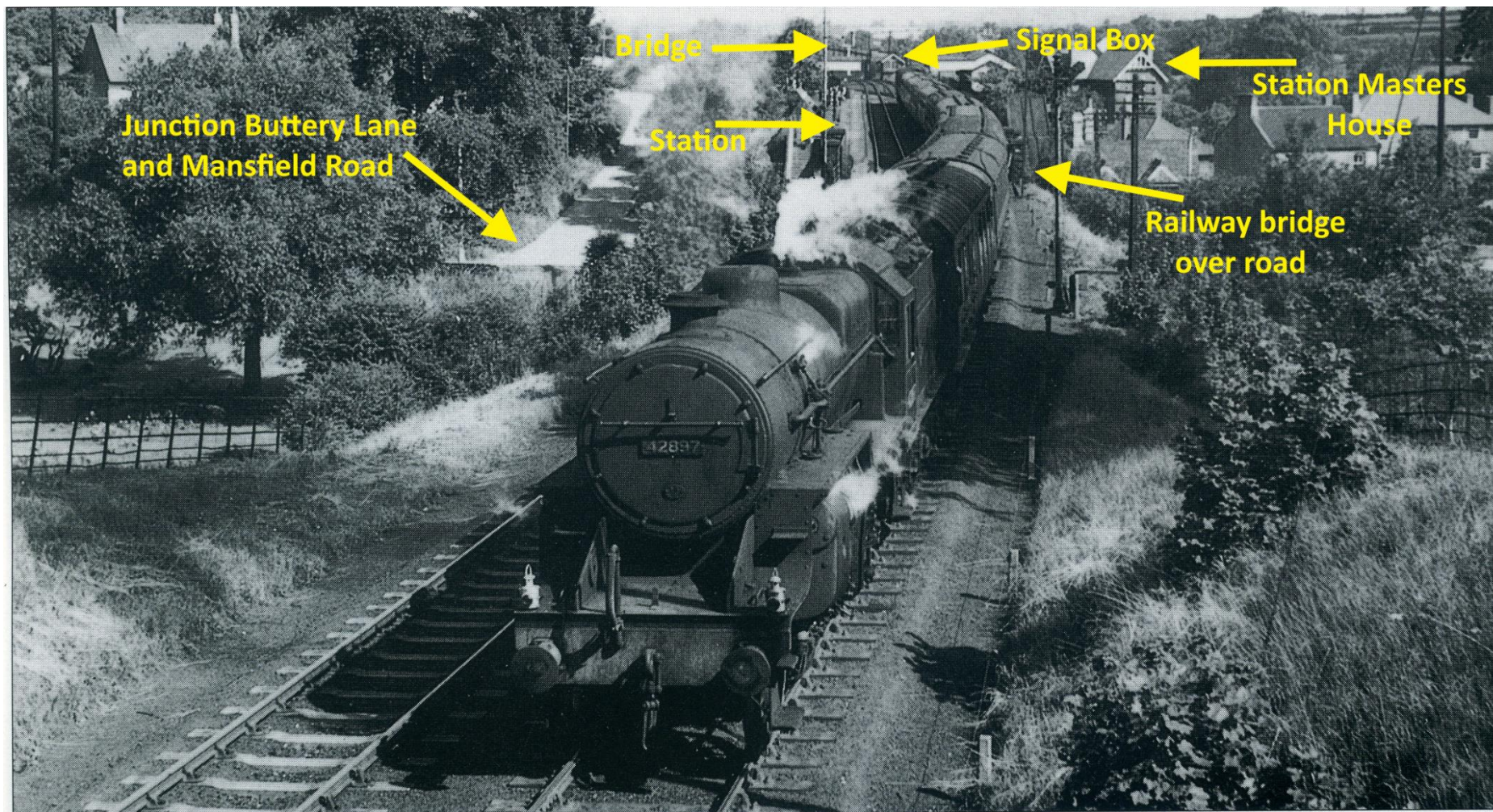
Up.	Week Days only.						
	<i>mm</i>	<i>mm</i> ³	<i>aft</i>	<i>aft</i> ⁷	<i>Aft</i> ⁸	<i>aft</i> ³	<i>aft</i>
Shirebrook.....dep	7.05	9.20	12.50	2.00	3.55	5.10	6.25
Pleasley	7.11	9.26	12.56	2.06	4.01	5.16	6.31
Skegby	7.17	9.32	1.02	2.12	4.07	5.22	6.37
Sutton-in-Ashfield	7.27	9.37	1.08	2.17	4.12	5.26	6.41
Newstead	7.37	9.47	1.18	a	4.22	5.36	6.51
Hucknall	7.45	9.55	1.26	2.35	4.30	5.42	7.00
Butler's Hill	7.48	9.58	1.29	2.38	.....	.....	7.03
Bestwood Colliery	7.51	10.01	1.32	2.41	4.35	.....	7.07
Bulwell Forest	7.54	.....	1.35	.....	.....	.....	.....
Daybrook	8.02	10.10	1.42	.....	.....	5.52	7.16
Gedling & Carlton	8.10	10.17	1.49	.....	.....	.....	7.25
Netherfield	8.16	10.22	1.55	.....	.....	.....	7.31
Nottingham (London Rd.) ‡.....arr	8.22	10.28	2.01	.....	.....	6.00	7.37
Nottingham (Victoria.).....arr	8.26	10.32	2.05	2.51	5.07	6.03	7.41

³ Weds. And Sats ⁷ Wednesday & Saturday Via Carrington ⁸ Via Carrington

‡ High Level

a Stops on Saturdays to take up for Nottingham

A Final Image of the Skegby Railway: I do like this image for, not only does it show the entire Skegby railway, but it was also taken from one of my favourite childhood places – to the side of the bridge that crossed the railway at Skegby Bottoms (a pedestrian bridge is still there). It is also a good photograph giving a flavour of Skegby in the 1960s.



The Walk Five: The G.N.R. Leen Valley Extension to Pleasley Colliery

We now complete our walk by returning to Pleasley Colliery.

The section we walk, Skegby to Pleasley Colliery, opened for minerals on 1st March 1898. In the rush to get it open it was initially run as a single line but double line working started in November of the same year.



Start by walking back to the railway bridge near the old signal box. Then set off towards Pleasley.

The section from Pleasley to Shirebrook Colliery opened 26 November 1900. Goods and minerals ran to Langwith commencing 29 May 1901 and on 1 November of that year passenger services were extended beyond Skegby to Shirebrook (later renamed Shirebrook South) and it became possible to travel from Shirebrook to Nottingham on the line.

This is a very pleasant walking section with much of it raised so that the views are, in theory anyway, excellent. It could do with a little more control of the trees and bushes.

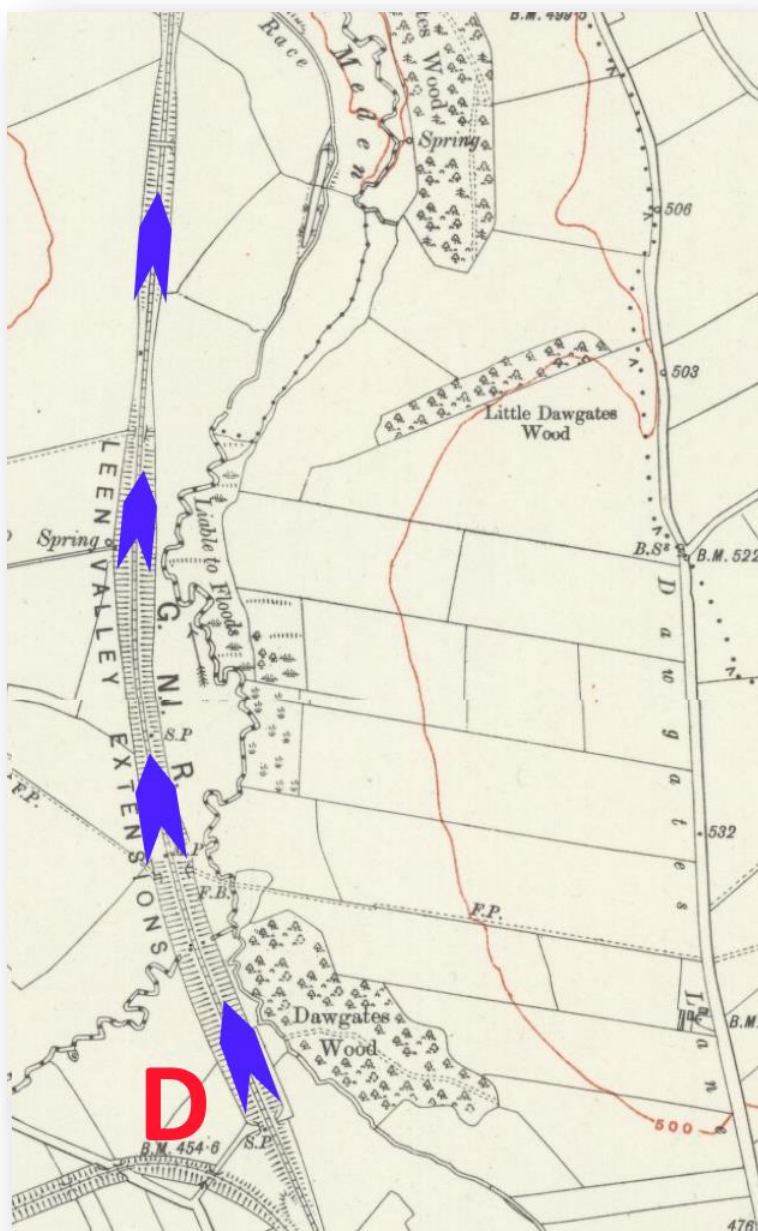
The 1914 maps are good along this stretch for they show just how little has changed in the past one hundred years.

Far over on the right is Dawgates lane, clearly marked on the map and still following the same line.

Perhaps not on the same level of romance, the sewage works are still in the same place – the map tells us they are controlled by Skegby Rural District Council – one element that has certainly changed.

As we move on we see Dawgates Wood then Little Dawgates Wood. The first of these was always known locally as Bluebell Wood. What a wonder it was when these flowers were at their height.

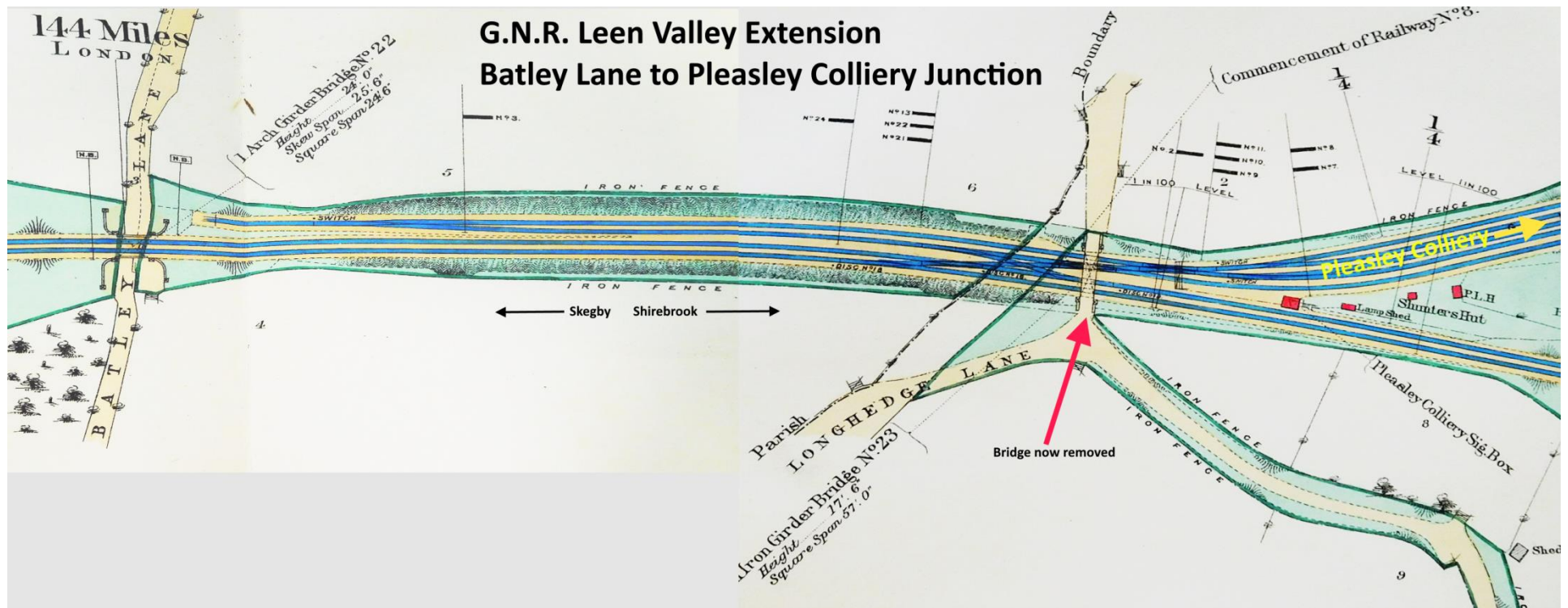
Something like fifteen years ago, I went back to the woods but someone had let in the cattle and the Bluebells were trodden down – very disappointing – never go back is the lesson!



Point E: The G.N.R.: Batley Lane to Pleasley Colliery Junction & Pleasley G.N.R.



Pause when you reach Batley Lane (this is where the bridge has been removed and there is a slope towards the road). The image below shows the next and final section of the walk towards Pleasley Colliery. Walk over the road and up the slope. You can see from the G.N.R. Plan why this part of the railway (in a cutting) is so wide. It was built to make sidings for the railway so that empty coal wagons could be held. As you walk along this section it is worth checking the rocks on the right hand side for you can see many instances of the bore holes made to hold the explosives for firing the rock to make the cutting.





Pause just before you reach the point where you are forced to leave the railway and go up a ramp on the left. The ramp is in place because a bridge over Longhedge Lane was removed and the area filled with earth and rubble. With the benefit of the photograph below you can get a sense of what was here when both the railway and bridge were in place.



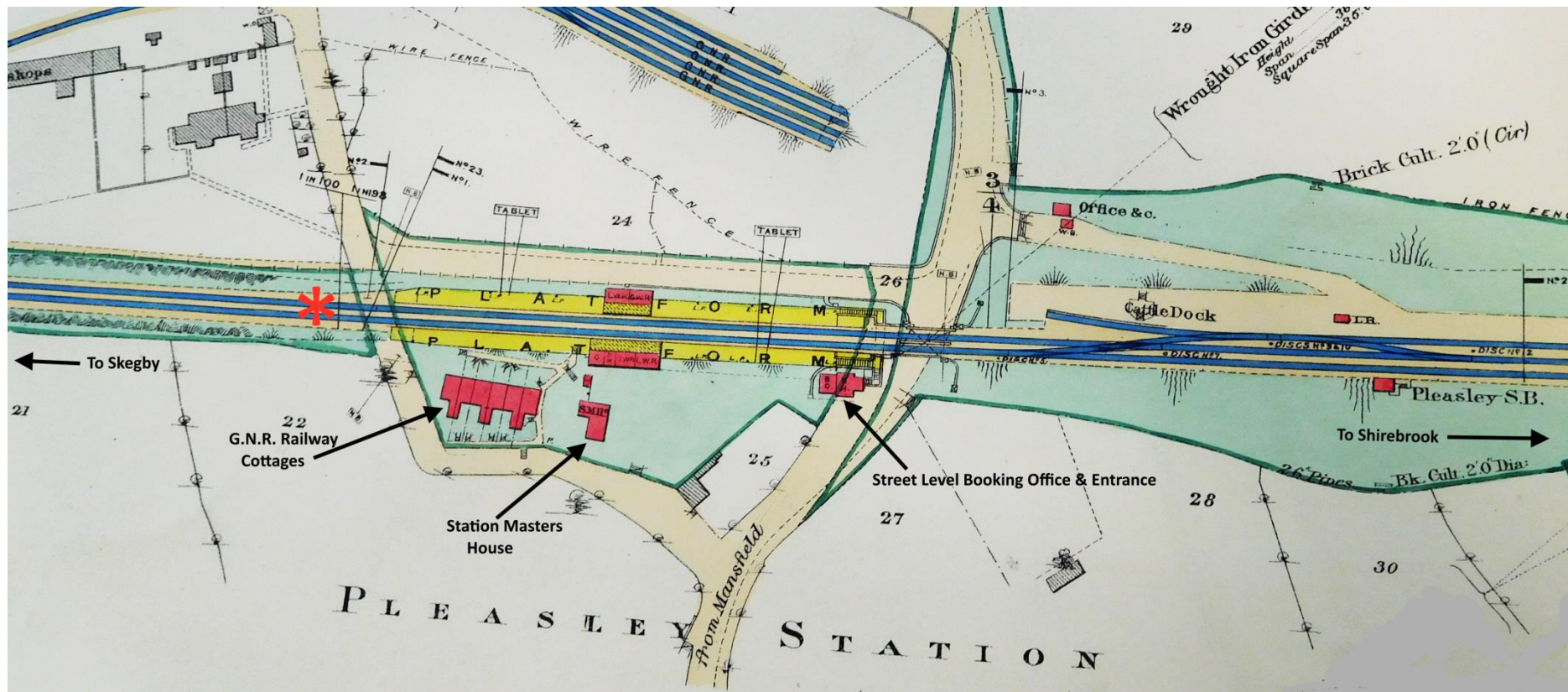
Check this with the diagram on the previous page and all the elements of the photograph are in the image. The bridge is clear and underneath it in the centre is Pleasley Colliery Signal box. The two lines to the right are the ones to Shirebrook and the left hand ones went into Pleasley Colliery.



To progress, you will need to go up the left hand ramp and then down the other side to get back onto the railway. Once down, you find yourself standing where the Pleasley Colliery Junction was located. Hard now to imagine this given the extent of changes. Walk on until you are just before the spot where the path ends. You are now standing at the * point on the G.N.R. diagram on the next page which shows Pleasley G.N.R. railway including the Station. You are standing just before the platforms began. Take a look at the diagram and photograph below.



Walk through the right hand gap in the hedge and the buildings to your left are the six Great Northern Cottages built for railway workers. You can see them on the original diagram below together with the Station Masters House (much altered). The front of these cottages actually faced the platform of the station as you can see. Entry to the station was from the main road below with, as at Skegby, a street level booking office. Once you had your ticket there were stairs to climb (these are marked). Trains from this station went to Skegby, Sutton and onwards to Nottingham in one direction, and to Shirebrook in the other. A bridge crossed the road carrying the railway and on the other side of the road from the Booking Office was the goods yard with Cattle Dock etc.



Complete Listing of Passenger Trains Leaving Pleasley (both stations) in 1922 in one direction only – Nottingham, Alfreton or Staveley.

	<i>mrn</i>	<i>mrn</i>	<i>mrn</i>	<i>mrn</i>	<i>aft</i>	<i>aft</i>	<i>aft</i>	<i>aft</i>	<i>Aft</i>	<i>aft</i>	<i>aft</i>	<i>aft</i>	<i>aft</i>
Mansfield..... <i>dep</i>	6.55		7.23			1.05		2.00		4.52		5.15	
Mansfield Woodhouse	6.59		7.27			1.09		2.04		4.56		5.19	
Shirebrook..... <i>dep</i>		7.05		9.20	12.50		2.00		3.55		5.10		6.25
Pleasley	7.09	7.11	7.37	9.26	12.56	1.17	2.06	2.14	4.01	5.06	5.16	5.29	6.31
Teversall	7.17							2.22				5.37	
Whiteboro'	7.23							2.28				5.43	
Tibshelf & Newton	7.27							2.32				5.47	
Westhouses & Blackwell	7.32							2.37				5.52	
Alfreton & South Normanton	7.35							2.40				5.56	
Pye Bridge..... <i>arr</i>	8.01							3.36				6.03	
Rowthorn & Hardwick			7.44			1.23				5.13			
Glapwell			7.49			1.28				5.18			
Palterton & Sutton			7.54			1.33				5.23			
Bolsover			7.58			1.36				5.28			
Staveley Town..... <i>arr</i>			8.07			1.44				5.39			
Skegby		7.17		9.32	1.02		2.12		4.07		5.22		6.37
Sutton-in-Ashfield		7.27		9.37	1.08		2.17		4.12		5.26		6.41
Newstead		7.37		9.47	1.18		A		4.22		5.36		6.51
Hucknall		7.45		9.55	1.26		2.35		4.30		5.42		7.00
Butler's Hill		7.48		9.58	1.29		2.38		.....		.....		7.03
Bestwood Colliery		7.51		10.01	1.32		2.41		4.35		.....		7.07
Bulwell Forest		7.54		.....	1.35		.....		.....		.....		.....
Daybrook		8.02		10.10	1.42		.....		.....		5.52		7.16
Gedling & Carlton		8.10		10.17	1.49		.....		.....		.....		7.25
Netherfield		8.16		10.22	1.55		.....		.....		.....		7.31
Nottingham (Victoria.)..... <i>arr</i>		8.26		10.32	2.05		2.51		5.07		6.03		7.41

The timetable on the previous page shows just how good was the rail service enjoyed by Pleasley residents in 1922. At that time bus services locally were only just getting going so trains were vital means of getting from place to place.

Remember, this is the complete service covering both railway stations and it is in one direction only. Over a weekday in 1922, thirteen passenger trains left Pleasley in this direction. It was no trouble at this time for Pleasley people to hop on a train, say to Nottingham, Staveley or Alfreton, plus all of the other stops in between. The stations mentioned gave access to further travel. Staveley, for example, gave access to Chesterfield and Sheffield.

Example, getting to London

1922

Catching the 7.11 train from Pleasley got you into Nottingham at 8.26 leaving plenty of time to catch the 8.43 Great Central train to London Marylebone Station. This arrived at 11.10 meaning your journey had taken one minute over four hours (this example also fits Skegby and Sutton).

2016

Leaving Pleasley on the 6.55 bus to Mansfield would give you plenty of time to catch the 7.43 train which arrives in Nottingham at 8.19, leaving you with sufficient time to catch the 8.32 London train arriving at London St. Pancras 10.17. Three hours and 23 minutes total.

The 2016 journey Pleasley to London is just under 40 minutes quicker. Not an awful lot of progress in nearly a century.

P.S. It is possible to go all the way on to Nottingham on the 6.55 from Pleasley and this gets into Nottingham 8.00. However, the bus arrives at the Victoria Bus Station and it is still quite a walk to the railway station. So the 8.32 would still be the choice. There is a train to London at 8.05 but the 7.29 from Mansfield arrives only one minute earlier and so I haven't included that train here.

As a steam fan the 1922 journey would be the one for me and I bet it was quite something in an age when transport out of the village was not easy. Widespread bus services became more common as the 1920s progressed. Before that it was the train was the first form of transport that gave people the ability to move easily locally or nationally.

The end of passenger services.

The spread of buses, and as already mentioned, trams in cities such as Nottingham, took away from the railways the passenger traffic from city suburbs: meaning that small places such as Pleasley, formed a much higher proportion of passenger traffic than before. The small population of towns and villages such as Shirebrook, Pleasley and Skegby would never justify regular passenger services on their own. Sutton was a larger town but had three competing railway services in the 1920s.

The end came for passenger services across all our lines at about the same time. Passenger services on the Doe Lea Line and the Tibshelf to Pleasley both ceased 28th July 1930. Services ended on the Leen Valley Extension 14th September 1931.

Passenger services were reintroduced between Sutton on the Leen Valley Extension and Nottingham in February 1956. British Railways warned that the reopening was on a 'use it or lose it basis'. The experiment failed and in September that same year the line was once again closed for passenger traffic.

But check out the special train flyers below (pp 34-35) and you will see that it was still possible to catch a holiday special, football special or just a travel offer from the stations on the Leen Valley Extension. The closure of Skegby and Pleasley in the 1960s put an end to this for those stations but the second flyer is from 1964 when Shirebrook and Sutton on the Leen Valley were still operating.

The Midland railway stations also continued to operate for excursions.

Right up until the 1950s it was still possible to send freight along our railways – this increasingly went to road traffic and the dates of freight closure are given below.

The End of the Line, the end of the walk



Once you've taken a look around, bob back through the hedge and head back to the car park or go for a drink at the Visitors Centre.

There are quite a number of railway remains in Pleasley and if you want to see you can continue the walk by passing the Great Northern Cottages and Station Masters House and heading down to the main road.

Turn left and walk along.

What else is there to see?

- Use the above Railway Diagram to locate the steps to the platform.
- The Midland Railway also built cottages and these still exist.
- There are a lot of walls and fencing still existing. You can easily tell these.

The end of the Great Northern Leen Valley Extension

- ❖ Passenger services from Shirebrook to Nottingham were withdrawn on the 14th September 1931.
- ❖ The goods yard at Teversal closed 1st October 1951.
- ❖ Skegby goods closed, 4th August 1952.
- ❖ Pleasley West goods closed 1st September 1952
- ❖ Goods Traffic from Teversal closed 7th October 1963
- ❖ Shirebrook South closed for local goods on 4 February 1957

The entire route from Langwith Junction to Kirkby South Junction was closed on 27 May 1968.

Closing Words

With the end of passenger and freight traffic our three railways became dependent on the movement of coal – but remember, that is the main reason they were built in the first place.

The Doe Lea Line had a very brief existence – the line operated throughout its entire length for only forty years and had by far the shortest lifespan of our lines (the top section – first to be built – didn't close until 1993).

The Leen Valley Extension was only in service for around sixty six years. It was the only one of the lines to close throughout its entire length in one go. The others closed gradually – as the coal mines they served closed so did they. There was no other reason for their existence.

It's interesting that the very first stretch of our lines built – what was originally called, 'Tibshelf to Teversall' was the last to close. It had survived from May 1866 right the way through to 1993.

Now these lines are top class walking and cycling routes. They are an excellent source of fresh air to a district that had to breath coal dust for so long.

During the writing of this I have discovered a large stockpile of original material – too much for the present source. I have decided to write the individual stories of these lines beginning with the Leen Valley Extension. As these histories are published I will place them on the free site so that anyone can download them for free.

CHEAP TRIPS

TO

NOTTINGHAM

SATURDAYS

5th 12th 19th and 26th MAY

2nd and 9th JUNE 1956

FROM	TIMES OF DEPARTURE	RETURN FARES Third Class	ARRIVAL TIMES ON RETURN
	pm	s d	pm
SHIREBROOK North	1 25	2/9	6 58
SHIREBROOK South	1 30	2/9	6 53
PLEASLEY East	1 37	2/9	6 47
SKEGBY	1 43	2/6	6 41
SUTTON-IN-ASHFIELD Town	1 48	2/1*	6 36
HUCKNALL Central	2 3	1/3*	6 21
BULWELL COMMON	2 9	9*	6 14
NOTTINGHAM Victoria... arrive	pm 2 17	Passengers return same day at ...	pm 6 5

* SPECIAL DAY RETURN FARE.—Passengers holding such tickets may travel outward and return by any train on day of issue.

CHILDREN under three years of age, free ; three years and under fourteen, half-fares.

NOTICE AS TO CONDITIONS

These tickets are issued subject to the British Transport Commission's published Regulations and Conditions applicable to British Railways, exhibited at their stations or obtainable free of charge at Station Booking Offices. For LUGGAGE ALLOWANCES also see these Regulations and Conditions.

RAIL TICKETS CAN BE OBTAINED IN ADVANCE AT STATIONS AND OFFICIAL RAILWAY AGENTS

Further information will be supplied on application to Stations, Official Railway Agents, or to W. H. CARTER, District Commercial Manager, DERBY. Telephone: Derby 42442, Extn. 104 ; or NOTTINGHAM Victoria. Telephone: Nottingham 44381, Extn. 33.
E. R. WILLIAMS, District Passenger Manager, SHEFFIELD Victoria. Telephone: Sheffield 25167, Extn. 4.

Travel in Rail Comfort

March 1956

BR 35000

BRITISH RAILWAYS

Arthur Gaunt & Sons (Printers) Ltd.,
Heanor, Derbyshire.

Whitsuntide Holidays 1964



day trip to Blackpool Monday 18th May

FROM	TIMES OF DEPARTURE	RETURN FARES Second Class	ARRIVAL TIMES ON RETURN
NOTTINGHAM Victoria ...	am 8 15	s d 22/6 22/-	pm 11 5
NEW BASFORD ...	8 21		10 59
SUTTON-IN-ASHFIELD (Town)	8 46		10 39
SHIREBROOK South ...	9 1		10 26
SHIREBROOK North ...	9 7		10 20
BLACKPOOL North ... arrive	pm 12 38	Passengers return same day at ...	pm 6 40

Light Refreshments will be available on the train in each direction.

FOR DETAILS OF LATE TRANSPORT AT NOTTINGHAM VICTORIA ON RETURN—
SEE OVER.

British Railways
LONDON MIDLAND REGION

Extract from the record book of Sutton Town Signal Box for Monday, December 1st 1958 (Down Line – Towards Skegby)

[illegible]

The signal box records at this time had two facing pages; one for the down line, the other the up line (see next page). This one covers one days records for the down line, recording all trains going from Sutton towards Skegby together with some terminating at Sutton. It is an interesting document for it shows us just how much traffic went towards Skegby on this day plus other interesting information such as; it was a fine day and the clock was one minute slow at 10.00 am.

G Holland opened the box at 6.40. On the left is a record of how each train is signalled and most here are signalled 4 1 which indicates an empty mineral train. This is to be expected because full coal trains travelled from Skegby and empty ones towards Skegby for filling at Silverhill, Teversal, Pleasley or Shirebrook Collieries.

A few trains had Sutton as their destination and these are marked 'Terminal'. G Holland handed over to H S Hallam at 2.40 and the box was closed at 6.50 with 18 trains being handled on this day. I am fortunate to have the book for this box covering the period November 1st 1958 to May 11 1959.

Extract from the record book of Sutton Town Signal Box for Monday, December 1st 1958 (Up Line – From Skegby)

[illegible]

The clock situation is more dramatic on this page for it stopped at 7.18. The G F reference refers to Ground Frame – some points in the sidings had levers next to them that the engine driver or guard could change themselves. At 10.22 (faint print) is the signature of the Station Master, Lingard who signs the book.

Most of the traffic coming from Skegby (signalled 1 4), unsurprisingly, was full mineral (coal) trains. A couple of light engines (signalled 2 3) are recorded, as are empty wagon trains (signalled 4 1).

Rule 55 is interesting and came into force following a series of accidents when trains were stood on a running line waiting and were forgotten by the signal man resulting in another train crashing into them. The rule states that, if a driver was so delayed the fireman, or guard etc. must report to the signal box.

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Map Used

Ordnance Survey Map, Derbyshire XXXI, Revised 1914, Published 1921 (OS Six-Inch England and Wales)

Original G.N.R. Plans

The Great Northern Railway Plans of Leen Valley Extension: 2 Chains to 1 Inch, 1902.

Record book of Sutton Town Signal Box

The original book is in my possession and covers the period; November 21st 1958 to May 11th 1959.

Railway Timetables

Great Northern Railway: January - December 1900

Midland Railway: 1901/10/01 to 1902/04/30

Midland Railway Working 1869/12/01 until further notice Working Time-Table

References in Text

ⁱ Hurst, Geoffrey, (1987), p74

ⁱⁱ Henshaw, (2000), p90

ⁱⁱⁱ Henshaw, (2000), p97